HENRIETTA BELLMANN:

OR,

THE NEW FAMILY PICTURE.

A NOVEL.

BY

AUGUSTUS LA FONTAINE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATHI

HENRIETTA BELLMANN.

CHAPTER I.

SIRIUS.

THE first time the Pastor's family visited the Collector, after these events, Antonia was presented to the Pastor, as the Collector's grand-daughter. Scarcely casting a slight glance at the child; he did not deign to ask any questions respecting her. The Lieutenant seemed as if he was only intent on caressing Henrietta; the Collector's wife fixed her eyes on the ground: both silently thanking heaven for the Pastor's silence respecting the Collector's grand-daughter. The Collector looked grave, and retired to his study, whither his brother soon followed.

"Bellmann has not only failed in politeness, in paying so little attention to Antonia," said the Collector, greatly disturbed; "but it was the same as if he had said to me—my eyes are too pure to dwell on the fruit of your shame."

"Brother, you do him injustice," replied the Lieutenant, with the kindest look in the world.

"You would not say so, had you observed the disdain with which both he and his wife regarded the innocent child; of me he thought it unnecessary to make any enquiry, because he had condemned me unheard."

"He waits for Antonia's absence, to make the enquiries you expect."

The two brothers returned to the parlour. M. Bellmann persevered in his silence respecting Antonia; but he spoke with unusual zeal, in behalf of the superior knowledge of the present age, and against men's folly in preferring the antients. The subject created a warm debate

between

between him and the Collector, in which each spoke contrary to his own feelings. At the bottom, the Collector was of the same opinion as the Pastor; but he spoke from his old habit of contradiction. The Lieutenant attempted to interpose. "Brother," said the Collector vehemently, "when, in the evening, you survey the stars, and turn your eyes towards *Orion*, *Sirius*, and the *Twins*; when, full of a pious confidence, you pronounce that name sacred to your feelings---"

"When I see the *Twins*," replied the Lieutenant extremely moved, "I think of your affection for me."

"True, brother; and *Sirius* seems to you the throne of God; because once you were told by our uncle (he was a learned astronomer, said the Collector, turning to the Pastor), that *Sirius* was probably the central sun of the system of our world.--- Since that time, Sir," said he turning again to the Pastor, "my brother, during the night of the day of the year in which *Si*-

rius with us enters precisely under the meridian at midnight, my brother, I say, begins to contemplate the stars, and says, or thinks at least, there is the eternal throne of God in the centre of heaven, placed between the past and the future. Nothing could at such times persuade him that chance had placed *Orion* precisely at midnight in the meridian."

The Pastor coldly demanded, what that was designed to prove?

"If an innovator should change the name of the stars, my brother has been used to contemplate, and place, as the deceased Schiller did, the twelve apostles in the zodiac, or even, like another astronomer, convert *Orion* into the double eagle of the Roman empire, I venture to predict that the sublime ideas those stars present at present to his imagination, would instantly vanish. No longer would he contemplate with enthusiasm *Sirius* in the night of the day of the year———"

The Collector did not perceive that the

whole

whole countenance and figure of the Pastor was distorted. His voice trembling with passion, he exclaimed, "Were it even from a spirit of innovation that the ridiculous names of the stars were changed, your censure ought to be the last to be heard; for, in your house, all things are done in a mode the most novel. You have a granddaughter, and the Lieutenant has a son, neither of which were born in wedlock!"

The Lieutenant sprang from his chair, and took the hand of his brother, dreading to hear his resentment too sharply expressed; but the Collector, looking at the Pastor, in the most open, frank, and friendly manner, mildly said—"I know not how it is, but you are generally right in our disputes. To say the truth, I begin myself to grow weary of whatever savours of antiquity; and if all were of my mind, many things would be changed. My brother knows that *Sirius* I frequently name *Anubis*; for example, I never call it the morning star; but it is of little consequence, my dear Sir, by

what name we call it, provided it is not a star fatal to our friendship."

So violent was M. Bellmann's anger, that he could scarcely answer with civility to this mild overture. He had formerly written a memoir, (of which the Collector was entirely ignorant), to support the project of giving the stars the names of the illustrious men of antiquity, so that children might at the same time learn history and astronomy; and he imagined the Collector intended to rally him on this memoir, which had long since sunk into oblivion. But so kind were the manners of the Collector on this occasion, that the Pastor at length perceived his error, and returned home without the smallest spark of animosity.

When he was gone, the Lieutenant observed, that what he had said with respect to their children was extremely harsh.

"Say cruel, brother; and the more so from the manner in which it was uttered."

I am

"I am pleased," said the Lieutenant, "that you did not answer angrily."

"I am only sorry," said the Collector's wife, permitting a deep sigh to escape her, "I am only sorry for your indifference on this subject; for the Pastor has only expressed what all the world thinks of us."

"You are right, my dear wife; although our little town, which you consider as the whole world, would make a very sorry figure in comparison of *Sirius*, of which we have been speaking. He to whom the small town in which he dwells, his street, or even his house, does not, at certain moments, appear more vast than the whole world, deserves not to have either neighbours or friends. Innocence is a great blessing; but reputation and disgrace are also something, for our neighbours have these words often enough in their mouths. You are therefore right; but tell me, what can be done to avoid this evil?"

They knew not what resolution to take; and

and agreed, at last, that they must permit the world to talk.

"The scandal mongers!" exclaimed the Collector's wife, with an unusual degree of anger.

"We must pardon them," replied the Collector. "Let us be at peace with our neighbours; and if they are not too severe with our names, we must feign ignorance of their language, and rejoice in secret over the children that God has given us, and whom you have so generously received."

The Lieutenant began again to speak of the *Twins*, till he saw these stars appear in the heavens. He looked at them for some time; then pointing to them, he said—"Brother, I could wish however that these stars were named *William* and *Antonia*."

"Resign that to the will of Providence," replied the Collector, tenderly pressing his hand.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

ANTONIA.

WILLIAM did not appear to have any other sentiments for Antonia than those of a brother. He readily joined the Lieutenant in her praises, but he continued to regard her with indifference, notwithstanding the Lieutenant's attempts to form a nearer union between the young people. The Lieutenant had, in his own mind, selected Antonia as the woman that should constitute William's future happiness; for he was the only person in the house who felt all the sweetness and value of Antonia's disposition. Antonia had acquired a fear of the Collector, and could not treat him with confidence, because he made the noblest sentiments the object of his raillery. She was ignorant that at such times it was, that his heart beat with greater emotion, and that he was only weak enough to wish to conceal his agitation beneath the mask

of gaiety. She believed, that it was his amusement to turn into ridicule whatever is excellent, and sublime; nor did she comprehend how it was, that the Lieutenant loved him with such an entire affection.

The Collector's wife behaved to Antonia as a kind and attentive mother, yet she would often say to her, "Of what avail is it, Antonia, to possess fine talents? to be a good housewife, and a good mother, are alone essential to a woman's happiness. Habits of patience, industry, and regularity, are those which are most useful."

Antonia, for a long time, was far from being happy in the Collector's house; the taciturn Lieutenant did not seem to regard her with any particular attention; he never spoke to her but in a very serious tone: when, however, she did not observe him, he looked at her with the most tender affection. Antonia only by degrees discovered the character of any one of the family. The first that she began to appreciate

preciate was the Lieutenant: his unvaried sweetness of temper, his gentleness, patience, and generosity, she felt in all their force, as they were gradually developed to her mind. When she had any grief to communicate, he was the first to whom she would venture to unburthen her heart, and she received, in return, proofs of an affection that might be called paternal.

Antonia at the very first moment mistook the character of William. She imagined he had a thousand faults, and conceived his capacity to be very bounded. Afterwards, successive observation compelling her to do him more justice, she still supposed him to be an inconsiderate youth, yet vain of assuming the manners of the Collector; and so negligently educated, as to indulge himself in whatever his fantasies dictated.

Antonia had been brought up by her grandmother, part of whose enthusiastic temper had been thus infused into her. But the enthusiasm of Antonia, was sof-

tened by the utmost gentleness, and kindness of disposition. Although her grandmother had never been taught by all her experience to moderate her own ardent temper, yet she had carefully inculcated into the young mind of Antonia that humility and patience are surer guides to happiness, than that presumption, which braves the world, its opinions, and the chances of fortune. Human nature, she observed, was not framed for the perfect enjoyment of happiness in this world; that misfortune was not to be opposed only by courage, but still more, by resignation. "My child," she would say, "commit not the error to suppose that nature alone has given you a part to act in this world; society imposes another duty, often painful and difficult to perform. It was my mistake inflexibly to demand the rights which nature seems to confer upon us, I early determined to throw off the yoke of society as an intolerable tyranny; but in the search of an ideal happiness, I encountered

assured

assured misery, and was the victim of presumption."

Her grandmother communicated to Antonia, from time to time, such portions of her own history as she thought proper to enforce her instructions. The young heart of Antonia began early to sigh for a peaceful life, for tranquil pleasures, and (if ever love was to influence her destiny) for a love of a pure and delicate nature. Of the latter, however, she taught herself to despair. Her grandmother had observed to her, that the generality of marriages were carefully wove by interest, and that rarely, true affection had any existence as the principles of these unions. Antonia was thus led to a habit of hiding her wishes in the recesses of her own heart. She herself often viewed them with distrust, and although ingenuous, acquired a habit that might almost be attributed to reserve. She did not expect to find in her grandfather's house any heart that would sympathize with hers; yet as she

performed

performed with alacrity whatever was given her in charge, she was considered as a good tempered, and docile child. All her other good qualities, were for a time hid. The Collector indeed, frequently observed with a secret pleasure, that his granddaughter resembled the mistress of his youth: still he was not satisfied to see her so submissive, so uniform in her temper. On this subject he had frequent disputes with his brother. This was not entirely unnoticed by her, and it did not contribute to give her a more advantageous opinion of her grandfather. The Collector's wife admired Antonia for her gentleness, and attention to her orders; but as she was the only person in the house whom she dared to command, she frequently reproved her, and not seldom without cause. William paid little attention to Antonia, and if she had appeared to him even more interesting, he would not have studied, in any particular manner, to gain her affection: for he loved Henrietta.

Antonia

Antonia did not find in Henrietta a mind to which she could unveil the secret workings of her own heart, she looked upon her as a coquet, who preferred admiration to esteem. At first, Henrietta seemed solicitous of Antonia's society, but the more she laboured to display her acquirements, the less amiable did she appear to Antonia; whose coolness she took for envy, and endeavoured to avenge herself, by affecting airs of superiority. Antonia was wounded by her studied contempt, yet she did not betray her feeling; alone, her feelings indemnified themselves by a torrent of tears.

The Lieutenant saw the failing of all his little schemes to inspire William with a love for Antonia. At last he ventured to reproach William for his indifference for a sister, for so he was used to call her, whose charms he was eager to set forth. The young man justified himself by arguing the coldness of Antonia's temper.

The Lieutenant communicated to his brother

brother the plan he had formed, and its ill success. The Collector joined in the scheme with his usual vivacity; beside, that he thought the thing, in itself, extremely desirable. He joyfully discovered that an interesting experiment was to be made, and experiments were a great source of gratification to him. "Brother," he said to the Lieutenant, pulling his hat over his forehead, "it is impossible to succeed by the means you take. Antonia is gentle, submissive, and amiable, but young men care little for such qualities."

"They are wrong, for these bear the sweetest of all fruits."

"Certainly, but I leave others to explain why man is more easily captivated by inferior attractions; for example, the beauties of a fine form, and face, make more impression than all the graces of the mind. I think we ſhall more certainly awaken the sentiment you wish in our young man, by imperceptibly leading him to remark the charms of Antonia's person."

"I would not excite him to love by such

such means," said the Lieutenant. "Brother, he ought to love her," he added with a grave look.

"Desire firſt begets love;" the Collector replied, with a look that would have been comic to an indifferent observer, "we ought to take nature according to her course."

The Lieutenant rubbed his forehead, "Brother, it may be so, but I dare not interfere with that." He looked at the Collector with an absent air. He said to himself, it may be dangerous to make experiments with the passions.

"Hem!" said the Collector, who already was enamoured of his own mode of making William in love with Antonia, "hem! where would the harm be?"

"What, brother! endeavour to excite passions in the breast of the young man: it would be better to leave it to God, to direct the course of things according to his good pleasure." The Lieutenant spoke with an air of uneasiness.

The

The Collector took his hand, "I would not give you cause of alarm. I give you my word that I shall be as careful as you on this subject."

The Lieutenant could not be so neuter as he had proposed to himself, and to his brother. He made new attempts towards his favourite design. He vaunted of Antonia's disposition to William; he even praised the charms of her person. He frequently took them both out to walk with him; but all his anxiety and trouble were useless; he forced all the conversation. The young people were so far from seeing each other with pleasure, that they were never more silent and dull than when they walked out with the Lieutenant.

When all the schemes the Lieutenant could devise, failed to awaken the sensibility of William, he conceived the design of making an essay on the heart of Antonia. It is true, in this he subdued one of his own strong feelings, for he thought that it was not quite right for the

the woman to make love to the man. He took Antonia out to walk with him alone, and talked of his favorite William with extravagant admiration; but though Antonia listened with great attention, she was silent, and the Lieutenant found she was as indifferent as William.

Antonia however, did not so entirely disregard what the Lieutenant had said to her. She intentionally led Madame Rautenbach, to speak of her adopted brother. She began to consider the young man's character more attentively, and found that she had not made less mistakes in that, than respecting the other persons of the family. Her discernment had already convinced her, that beneath the Collector's whimsical manners, an excellent heart was concealed; and although she could not gain his confidence, for he never gave that to any being but his wife and his brother, ſhe conceived gradually a great respect for him, founded on his noble, and generous mode of thinking. Her

conduct

conduct thenceforth, underwent a little change, her reserve wore away, she was generally more communicative, and even opened her heart a little to her protectress. She loved the Lieutenant with filial affection; she was less cool towards William, who in his turn, felt the affection of a brother for her. She began to understand every member of the family better, and did not fail to observe, that the Lieutenant eagerly seized every occasion to bring her into William's company. There must be some meaning in this, she thought to herself; and naturally guided by female instinct, she soon after, and for the first time, joined in William's praises. The Lieutenant's eyes brightened with pleasure, and his artless thoughts permitted some expressions to escape, which betrayed to Antonia, his design to unite her to William. Led by the same feelings, she soon concluded, that the Collector and his wife had formed the same project.

She now daily observed William with

more

more attention, and thought the Lieutenant's good opinion of him was far from being very extravagant. She was even often displeased with the Collector, when he reprehended William's eccentricities, or entered into some of his characteristic speeches, to prove that the boy's enthusiastic temper, which was now Antonia's admiration, was nothing better than extravagant folly. "After all, Antonia," said the Collector one day, when she was defending William, "it is not his fault, for he was only a child when my wife made him a Mahometan; but it is a sad thing, my dear; he is an absolute fatalist: and would you expect to hear a boy maintain with a haughty and inflexible air, that man ought to find all resources in himself alone; and that he who has need of any other to act virtuously, is already a knave, or prepared on the first occasion to become so?"

"Good God!" cried Madame Rautenbach,

bach, yet half checking herself, "surely that is not quite true!"

The Collector continued his discourse. With all this, Antonia perceived that he thought highly of William. He never spoke of him but with great feeling, and when William returned after any short absence, he always embraced him with the greatest affection; yet still she saw that, such was the Collector's humour, his wife, and the Lieutenant were frequently obliged to take the boy's part.

When Antonia was entirely convinced that William's heart glowed with a sacred enthusiasm, fed by the purest, and most innocent sentiments; when she saw that he was one whom neither wealth nor grandeur could corrupt; when she was compelled to acknowledge that he was capable of the same generous conduct, as the Countess Elizabeth; she conceived the most pure, and tender passion for him, which long would have remained a tran-

quil

quil and fraternal love, if the thought—thou art destined Antonia to be the wife of this young man—had not, in spight of herself, changed the current and tenor of her thoughts.

No one suspected the change in Antonia's mind. Her brilliant eyes informed by love, were supposed to be animated only by youth and health; and Antonia herself was ignorant how much she loved her adopted brother.

The Lieutenant shook his head at his disappointment, for he concluded that love would declare itself by words, or actions: he had no conception of the character of Antonia.

"Brother," said he sorrowfully, "I am afraid that the constellation of the Twins will no longer preserve its name."

"Hum!" exclaimed the Collector, "that is a pity! that is a pity! this child begins to interest me extremely. She is so gentle, so reasonable, so free from all turbulent passions! it is impossible that William should

should ever find one so well suited to make him a wife."

"Antonia does not want for feeling, brother."

"Well, we must wait the event."

"I wish, however," said the Lieutenant 'that they may be united to each other, but the will of Heaven be done!"

CHAPTER III.

ANTONIA DISCOVERS THE STATE OF HER HEART.

"BROTHER," said the Lieutenant, his eyes sparkling with joy, and withdrawing as he spoke from the window, on which he had been resting his arm for some time, "I wish that learned men would now and thenl ook out of the window, before they set down on paper laws which govern the world. I once knew a blind man, who made a system of light and colors

colors for himself, as correct as it was possible for a blind man to make, and what was truly surprising was, that he could give a very reasonable account of the matter. An English oculist restored him to sight. I shall be extremely astonished, he said just before the operation, if I shall see any thing which I had not a conception of before. The moment he received his sight, he was frantic with joy; My system, he cried, was well founded, but it was a system merely regarding straight lines and curves; I had not the smallest idea of the effect of light. From that time, continued the Lieutenant, when I make systems of metaphysics, I call to mind my blind acquaintance."

"But what have you been looking at, brother?"

"Directly opposite the window a linnet had made her nest, upon the edge of which, she stood feeding her young; and keeping her inquiet eye all the time fixed upon me. While I viewed this tender spectacle of maternal love, I perceived the

web of a spider, above which were suspended numbers of little spiders like so many small points, who seemed to be busily engaged with their species of labour. These two families at once within my view, so different, yet actuated by the same motives, extremely affected me. This is called instinct. Is it possible this can be a mechanical movement? I do not understand, brother, what the learned mean by the word instinct."

"It is the blind man's system of straight lines and curves."

"At a distance, brother, I saw a washerwoman, who was drying linen. Her infant was brought to her, which she kissed with a smile, after which, she returned it to the person by whom it was brought. Antonia, who observed this, cried out, Take the child, good woman, I will take care of the linen. William assisted Antonia, and the mother caressed her infant, her eyes expressing the most lively joy. The young people approached the happy mother, and seemed to look with pleasure

on

on this delightful spectacle; though certainly, I believe, with less emotion than I did. A thought arose in my mind, which had not the remotest connection with the scene before me."

"Rather say, it had the most immediate connection. Did you not wish to see Antonia employed like the linnet or the young washerwoman? one is instinct, as well as the other."

"I do not understand what instinct means."

"That is very possible, brother."

The two brothers continued the conversation respecting friendship, love, and fidelity. Antonia and William entered the room at the moment when the Collector said, "You cannot deny, brother, that if a husband, the most sincerely beloved, was to return to the world two years after his death, that this would not throw his wife into the greatest embarrassment, although she were the most virtuous of women: but to this love, the name of instinct may be given."

The Lieutenant drew near the pane of glass on which his name and his brother's were written; "If I were to die—:" emotion suffocated his voice.

"That is a different kind of love, dear brother," said the Collector pressing his hand.

"And cannot man and wife love each other like brothers?" asked the Lieutenant sorrowfully.

"Yes, they might; but suppose, brother, that Antonia and William loved each other with an inexpressible tenderness; if one were to die, and the other afterwards marry—" "I would never marry!" said Antonia and William in the same breath.

"You see that I am right," cried the Lieutenant triumphantly.

"No, brother, I only see that young people imagine the world is governed according to their feelings; as the learned think, that men conduct themselves on their principles. But I do not believe that these young folks would keep their promise."

"Dear

"Dear father," said William with glistening eyes and a faultering voice, "whatever you may say, I shall never love but once."

Antonia, who thought the same thing, cast a secret look at William, and was excessively alarmed at seeing his eyes so animated, and emotion strongly pictured in his countenance. She quitted the room, saying to herself, does he not speak like one who loves already?

Antonia, now, for the first time, examined the state of her heart, and now first perceived her strong affection for William. To say the truth, she thought she perceived something more; she thought William returned her love; for the Collector had put the case of their tenderly loving each other, and William had declared, if he lost her, he would never marry. She instantly thought of Henrietta, and the jealousy she felt and discovered, still further persuaded her of her attachment to William. She now concluded that he loved Henrietta, and was astonished that

it had hitherto escaped her observation; she even believed that William's love was returned, and that he only waited a favorable opportunity, to avow his love to his parents.

Her situation grew more and more painful. Henrietta became the object of her hatred. Her heart, which had ever before been so tranquil, suddenly resembled a stormy sea: so much was she agitated, by the various passions that contended for dominion.

Her grandfather had often repeated this lesson to her; "Never permit sentiments to take possession of your mind, which before were strangers to it, without examining their nature and cause. It is not enough that you justify yourself by saying, I ought to hate such a one because he is odious, because his actions merit my dislike. Self-love, my child, often takes the *object* of hatred for the *cause*. Search for the cause of all your sentiments in your own heart, and not in the conduct of others. We often think ourselves offended,

offended, when the cause is merely our own vanity. We endeavour to find an object worthy of hatred, and soon we find it, because we have not the courage to be just, and because we love only ourselves."

Antonia, at the desire of her mother, for so she always called Madame Rautenbach, had transcribed this and other similar lessons in a book, which she promised often to read, but not to shew to any one. Antonia took up this book, not to ask counsel, but to endeavour to quiet the trouble of her mind. She read, thinking more of the faults of Henrietta, than the matter before her. At length she came to the above passage, which so exactly suited her present situation and feelings, that with the discernment she possessed, she could not forbear to reflect deeply on it. She examined her heart, though somewhat reluctantly, and discovered, that from her first knowledge of Henrietta she had formed an ill opinion of her; but she discovered also, that her hatred commenced only with the idea that

William loved her. Blushing for herself, she shut the book and wept bitterly.

The tears gave her agitated heart relief. With a calm courage she recommenced her examination, and with confusion found, that envy and jealousy were the sources of her hatred.

My grandfather is right! she said with a vehemence little usual to her. She again opened the book, and observed a passage which was under-lined in the following manner:—"*It is not enough for man to own himself culpable, he does so chearfully enough, when he would shun the examination of how much he is culpable.*

"To acknowledge a fault, is not to repent of it: it is not a proof that we wish to correct a fault, *too frequently it is only the desire of forgetting it. In examining the nature of a fault, we acquire force to avoid it in future.*"

These words made a profound impression on Antonia's mind. She again shut the book. She quitted her room, saying, I will think no more of this at present.

However,

However, she thought of nothing all that day but her grandfather's precepts, and reproached herself for her feelings respecting Henrietta. When she was alone at night, she opened the book anew; she wished as much to be reconciled to her grandfather, as if he were present. She retraced her whole self-examination, and candidly and fully acknowledged that her first aversion to Henrietta was merely a dissembled vanity; for she could not disguise that Henrietta surpassed her in many accomplishments. After this frank avowal of her error, she went to bed, and having shed a profusion of tears, fell asleep.

The next day, to compensate for her injustice to Henrietta, she resolved to seize every occasion to set her forth with advantage, even at her own expence. How incessantly the delusions of the human heart change their form! This determination in some degree restored the tranquillity of Antonia's mind, and gave her a peculiar air of firmness: she wished her brother good morning in a very tranquil

and friendly manner; William was at that moment vehemently opposing a declaration of the Collector's, that the Paſtor, Bellmann, knew nothing of education. Antonia had even the courage to support her brother's argument, and with secret satisfaction, instanced Henrietta as a decided proof against the Collector's opinion. William was silent. Antonia would indeed have declared her belief, that Henrietta was the most perfect, as well as accomplished of females, had not the Collector said, "When a young woman praises another, either her superiority is beyond all question; or she dissembles; or she is guilty of injustice towards another; or rather---"

"Ah, brother!" cried the Lieutenant, "I am glad when *or*, and *or*, follow each other so rapidly, for they prove that suppositions lead to no conclusion."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONFESSION.

ANTONIA now secretly watched William's conduct, but could form no opinion on the subject of her anxiety. Sometimes, she thought, from his stolen looks at Henrietta, his attention to her, and his embarrassment in her presence, that he passionately loved her; but at other times, he appeared so calm when he spoke to her, and spoke to her so seldom, that he scarcely appeared to think of her. This state of doubt increased the trouble of Antonia's mind; and a resolution she had formed of subduing her passion, became every day weaker and weaker. When William at any time approached her, spoke kindly to her, or took her hand, her heart beat with the utmost violence. She instantly gave way to the delirium of hope, but afterwards fell into the extreme of dejection. "What ails Antonia?"

nia?" the Lieutenant frequently demanded of the Collector, who endeavoured to trace the cause of her evident uneasiness. Having no fixed opinion on the subject, he gave it in charge to William, to divert her melancholy; to whom he said gaily, "Speak to her of the things that are most agreeable to a young woman, praise her beauty, the whiteness of her skin, and her fine blue eyes, expressive of so sweet a melancholy."

"I hope," said Madame Rautenbach, with a smile that was not quite sincere, "William will never do the child so much wrong."

"So, ſo, dear wife; if I did not recollect that you are yourself a beauty, I should think you envious; you must know, brother, she was the instance of a beautiful hand, though in truth her fingers are somewhat bent at present."

"Bent!" replied Madame Rautenbach, holding out her hand to the Lieutenant, affecting indifference, but not a little piqued.

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The Collector fell into a loud fit of laughter, and the Lieutenant smiled. "You see, my son," said the Collector to William, "that all women love to hear they are handsome. Seek out Antonia, you now know the best mode of beguiling her melancholy."

William had too much respect for Antonia to praise her beauty to herself; but he spoke to her in terms of such tender compassion, he so affectionately laboured to divert and amuse her thoughts, that in a short time she recovered her usual serenity of temper.

Poor Antonia paid dear for this interval of happiness. She expected impatiently the fortunate hour when William would say to her, "Antonia! I love you!" But he fell back into his former indifference, and his attentions ceased with the recovery of her former spirits.

The Lieutenant one day observed to Antonia, "that he was happy William had so well executed his commission to dissipate her sorrow." Antonia stood like one

one turned to marble. "He was then employed to amuse me!" she said to herself: "Ah! why did not his own heart give him that office!" She retired to her chamber with a slow pace, and her head hung upon her bosom. After a shower of tears had afforded her indignant sensation a little relief, she said, "They shall not in future have any excuse to send one to amuse me." And now she resolved carefully to conceal her thoughts from the whole world.

One day, she happened to wander alone to the chapel of the Countess Elizabeth; she found the door open; she entered, and placing herself on her knees before the tomb, pressed her burning lips to the marble statue, and said with a firm and solemn air, "*I too will love, be silent, and die!*" A smile thenceforth sat on her countenance. Her gentleness and patience were never surpassed.

"Brother," said the Lieutenant, "Antonia's sweetness of temper is charming to me beyond all expression; if I were a young

young man, I should certainly love her to madness. Poor child! her country is not of this world; she seems to have no wish in this world."

"What, brother," cried the Collector ironically, "are you so simple as to believe that she has no wish?"

"Yes, brother, yet I do sometimes think that she has, when she fixes her timid eyes upon me, as if she had something very important to ask of me; and I say to her, Dear Antonia, is there any thing that I can grant you? speak to me, my love; and then she answers, she has no request to make."

"With all that," said the Collector, "young people are never without their wishes; if they have no will of their own, brother, they must be deficient either in physical or moral force. I leave you to choose in this dilemma."

The Lieutenant, with a look of the most perfect embarrassment, replied, "Generally you give me a dozen suppositions, and now you enclose me within two."

"Because, at present, brother, the question

tion is extremely interesting; if Antonia has any cause of uneasiness, she does wrong to conceal it."

At this moment, Antonia entered, and the Lieutenant repeated the following passage: "*And the king said unto the general of his army, treat the young Absalom with mercy.*" The Collector pressed his brother's hand, and turned a gentle look of inquiry upon Antonia. She answered with a smile. After a few questions urged with gentleness, he shook his head, and uttered some words rather reproachfully. She answered with the most humble tone and look, promised to amend, and earnestly besought him to spare her.

The Lieutenant could no longer repress his feelings. For the first time in his life he was angry with his brother: "By that God who knows all hearts, you do her injustice, brother! she has never deserved one reproach."

The Collector answered with emotion, "May God take the child under his protection! I own she can hear unmerited re-

proach without justifying herself. My unfortunate and beloved child," he continued, with a softened voice, " I believe you are very ill."

Antonia wept, and said to herself, " Alas, to death !"

The Collector now entreated her to acknowledge freely what was necessary to her happiness ? she answered, " that she knew of nothing." The Lieutenant, with all the vehemence of an affectionate temper, besought her to open her heart : she threw herself into the Collector's arms, to seek a refuge—a refuge from the irresistible kindness of the Lieutenant.

" Brother," said the Collector, " may not that be shut up in the heart which virtue and modesty may destine to be concealed ? My beloved child, have I divined the cause ? Answer only by a sign." " She cast down her eyes and gently sighed out, " Yes," and then was silent. " Antonia, remember, love, that your right to silence supposes the approbation of virtue." She looked at the Collector with an assured

assured air. "May God bless you, Antonia! Brother, respect the situation of our child! admire her courage! I will only add one word, Antonia---It is noble to conceal sorrow, it is nobler to overcome it."

Instantly Antonia rose, dried the tears from her eyes, and kissed the Lieutenant's hand; who said with a faultering voice, "Dear Antonia!" She threw herself into his arms. Shortly after she entreated her grandfather never to speak of this scene: when he had given his promise, she smiled, and left the room with an air more composed.

"Alas, brother, how I pity her!" said the Lieutenant.

"If I were young," said his brother, "I would say as you did, I should be the passionate lover of Antonia. Had I never seen her but in that moment when, rising and kissing your hand, she seemed to say, I have subdued myself; in that instant I recognised the grand-daughter of Antonia;---of the Antonia of my youth."

"Brother,"

"Brother," said the Lieutenant, "if I could but divine——"

"Have you not," interrupted the Collector, "observed any thing particular in the conduct of William? the sorrow of a young girl too often springs from an unfortunate attachment."

"I do not think," said the Lieutenant, "that William has any more than a fraternal love for Antonia."

CHAPTER V.

NINON.

THE Collector was not a little proud of having penetrated into the recesses of Antonia's heart. "Brother," said he, "did you not observe, that when I pronounced the words, "*May God bless you, Antonia!*" that her countenance changed from the character of sorrow to that of resignation."

"Yes, brother, I did, and I saw your own eyes brighten with satisfaction. What you

you did, brother, was suggested by the Divine goodness."

As the Collector had succeeded so well with Antonia, he resolved to try the experiment on William, whom he considered as the cause of his grand-daughter's melancholy. "Brother," he said, "I would lay a wager that there is some love-quarrel between these two young people." The Collector was confirmed in his suspicions by a word or two which escaped Antonia, in a subsequent conversation. The Lieutenant observed, that William was not to be understood. The first time that William was alone with the two brothers, the Collector began by some hints respecting Antonia; William appeared to muse. The Collector, now secure of victory, spoke more plainly, and pressed the subject with vehemence; but William suddenly burst into a loud laugh, which instantly disconcerted the Collector, and he abruptly ended the conversation, by desiring the young man to leave him alone with his brother. "You see," said he when William

liam was gone, "that I was not wrong in my conjecture."

The Lieutenant replied with great simplicity, "I am almost persuaded; but then you must acknowledge that there is something great in assuming so much gaiety, with such causes of vexation as you suppose William to have."

"The motive is to be considered, brother; otherwise, every courtier who regulates his physiognomy by that of the prince would be a true hero; and anatomy the true science of morals. You smile, brother! but I once heard a courtier, who had long studied under an anatomist, maintain, that a man who would prosper in the great world, had nothing more essential to learn, than to manage the muscles of his face."

"That may be," replied the Lieutenant, "but it is not the less honourable in William thus to cover his chagrin."

"Well, God forgive him, for playing a part from vanity, different from that which his nature dictates! There are virtuous dissemblers,

dissemblers, if I may say so, who affect the reverse of what they are---they are violent, and affect sweetness of temper; proud, and appear humble; precipitate, yet always yielding to the advice of others. These may be called the martyrs of virtue; they poison the cup of their own happiness in this world, are the torture of all that surround them, and maintain their gloomy, dissatisfied temper, till a compassionate death frees them from the chains they had bound on themselves."

"If there are such men as you paint, God grant them friends to close their eyes!"

"There are such, but William does not belong to that class, thank God!"

The Collector had perfectly seen that William loved Henrietta with all the extravagance of his fiery disposition; his love had commenced at first sight, but his romantic mind had thought it disgraceful to indulge the right of loving till his friend Rhodolphus should have lost all hope. He saw in Henrietta the original of that portrait,

trait, which he had formed to himself of all that was perfect in woman: and fired by the example of his friend, he had resolved to subdue his love.

After Rhodolphus' departure from the town, the Pastor Bellmann had left his daughter more to herself. He was much less apprehensive of the grave and silent William, than of the gay Rhodolphus: and then, what merited very seriously to be taken into consideration, was, that William, as the Collector's heir, would be a good match for his daughter. The Collector passed in the town for a rich man, and it was generally believed he would bequeath his all to William.

Henrietta was a very constant visitor at the Collector's, and the more William saw her, the more amiable he thought her: indeed, Henrietta did not want for very pleasing qualities. She had many fine accomplishments, which she displayed with all the natural charm of high spirits. The graces appeared innate in her; she did every thing with an ease, a vivacity, a delightful

lightful manner, which quite threw into the shade the thoughtful and serious Antonia. The Collector himself loved her society, although he found something in her to condemn; which he nevertheless was at a loss to explain. That which gave her the most influence over him, was, that she had acquired a particular knack of taking his ideas at a bound. Her comparisons, her illustrations, never appeared to him too extravagant, too grotesque. She indulged him in disputing, which was much, because her quick apprehension never failed to tell her when she ought to yield the argument.

There was something singular in her conduct towards William. The open enemy of every thing romantic, she derided enthusiasm in every form. The Collector joined her in her satire, till he himself unconsciously fell into the same habit, which gave Henrietta often a laugh of triumph. She distinguished William nevertheless, by her attention; while he adored her for the naïveté, the courage and vivacity of her thoughts,

thoughts. Antonia, herself, could not but acknowledge, that there was an air in her conversation, that seemed to be the effect of uncommon ingenuousness. William looked at her with rapture, when, with a look of irresistible gaiety, and with the most perfect innocence, she sometimes would ask a question, which not only disconcerted Madame Rautenbach, but even put her to the blush.

There was nothing assumed or affected in her intercourse with William; but, however well disposed she appeared towards him, and exquisite as was the delight he took in seeing her, he had too much courage and honour to declare his passion. His temptations were indeed very frequent, for the connection of the two families often gave him opportunity to be alone with her. Perhaps he would not have remained faithful to his resolution, had she partaken of his enthusiastic character; but whenever he seemed wrapt in some of those romantic dreams in which he indulged, it was then her delight to

attack him with unmerciful raillery, protesting in the most comic manner how charmingly his reveries became him.

Henrietta's character was the joint produce of art and nature. She was endowed with much sagacity, and had early perceived that indulgence to others is necessary to one's own happiness. She was therefore by principle obliging to the whole world. Her father, who imagined that on this side, her character resembled that of Ninon de L'Enclos, without partaking of any of her faults, was accustomed, in the effusions of his fondness, to call her his *Ninon.* He had not however the imprudence to inform his daughter what part Ninon had played in life. One day, Henrietta in turning over a biographical work, found the life of that celebrated courtezan, and read it by stealth; she then perceived why her father had always evaded the question she sometimes put of, who is this *Ninon?* The celebrity, the glory, that covered the name of *Ninon*, extremely excited her emulation, although she

she was too innocent and pure not to be shocked at her manner of life. She read the life several times. It became her favourite study; she examined and approved of her maxims, and gradually felt less disgust at the whole character. The qualities and principles of *Ninon* too much resembled her own, and what was still more dangerous, had too much affinity to the instructions she received from her father, respecting her future conduct in the world. The reading of this work therefore, was a subtle poison for Henrietta; and in whatever degree she condemned the life of Ninon, she could not forbear to consider her as a fortunate and happy woman.

A journey which her parents, at this period, made to the ordinary residence of the prince, was not without effect in the character of Henrietta. She cast a discerning eye over scenes and manners in a great degree novel to her. She acquired new accomplishments, and returned more formed in character. Yet instead of being

vain of the exterior advantages she had gained in this excursion, which was fully expected to be the case by Antonia and Madame Rautenbach, she was more docile and more amiable than ever.

William's love for her increased every day, but he nobly held his resolution to close his passion within his own bosom; for when he reflected on his situation, and the improbability of an honourable success, he resolved to cherish no hope.

William now pusued his studies with inconceivable ardour, yet sometimes he declined into a fit of despair, when he was compelled to conclude that all his labour was without motive. The passion, to be independent of the favour even of those whom he most loved, turned his thoughts to the consideration of the species of study that might most likely ensure him success. His inclination, and a degree of attainment he had already made in the science, fixed his choice on the complete study of the mathematics; which he therefore pursued with singular perseverance. Whenever

occasion

occasion offered, he assisted his study by practical knowledge; for example, he superintended most of the buildings in the town, and made journies to every place in the neighbourhood, that possessed any thing remarkable in mechanics. His application to a severe study, and his circumstances, continually added to his serious and thoughtful turn of mind, which was quite above the character of his years. Henrietta alone possessed the power to touch his affections with sensations of gaiety; yet even those could not continue against the bent of his disposition, and from them he always fell into a still deeper thoughtfulness. At times, after long conflicts with himself, he resolved to end the painful state of his passion, in some way or other; and was sometimes on the point of avowing his love to Henrietta; but then the discourse of the Collector to Rhodolphus returned full upon his mind —I will be silent and die! was ever the conclusion of these reveries: these words always filled his heart with new courage, and invigorated him to new sacrifices.

CHAPTER VI.

ANTONIA MAKES A RESOLUTION.

HENRIETTA frequently said to herself, the object of man is happiness, to which the passions are the only guide; yet, if prudence do not accompany them, they will lead us from the path to happiness. Her heart informed her, that the enjoyments of a life entirely serene, were inadequate to fill its desires, and although she openly made a jest of love, she sometimes felt a desire to have a heart allied to hers. She had long thought she could perceive that William loved her, and many incidents concurred to persuade her that she was not deceived. When she observed the adour of William's glances when he looked upon her, she would say to herself, with a sigh—how great must the happiness be, of being loved by this young man! As her father had often said that William would be an advantageous match, if he succeeded to the Collector's property,

there

there appeared to be no difficulty in the way of their union. The more she considered William's behaviour, the more was she convinced that he loved her; she therefore communicated her thoughts to the Pastor; yet with a degree of tranquillity, which assured her father that his resolution would be cheerfully received as her law.

The Pastor, after mature reflection, in his way, acknowledged, that he had no objection to William for a son-in-law. "The young man," he said, "is in the way of fortune, even though the property of the family should be divided between him and his sister. He is gifted with vigorous powers of mind, which may in the end compensate for the neglect and errors of his education. There can be little doubt he will succeed in the world, if he chooses; but it becomes your father, Henrietta, to ask you, if you can be happy with this young man? From a child, he has been accustomed to give the rein to all his fantasies, and there is something,

not only romantic, but I fear almost savage and intractable in his disposition."

"But do you think, father, that he is incorrigible?" replied Henrietta, with the gaiety of an unbounded confidence.

"I have my doubts—yet perhaps your influence—the trial may be made."

Henrietta now sought the company of William. She constantly rallied him, although with great delicacy and management, on his romantic notions, and the extravagance of his feelings; and sometimes so far gained a victory, as to extort a confession from him that these were faults. Her hopes, therefore, augmented daily. If he would but tell me that he loves me! said she to herself: but he made no such avowal, although Henrietta gave him every opportunity that decency would permit.

She had no clue for this conduct. What surprised her most was, that he was sometimes cold, distant, and almost repulsive in his manners towards her. She began to question if he really loved her; and

this

this almost induced her to dismiss the thought of him with disdain. Sometimes, when she regarded his attention and kindness to Antonia, and noticed that unbounded confidence which seemed to exist between them, she concluded Antonia to be a happy rival. Her vanity was then offended. She could treat William's neglect with contempt, ascribing it to the perverseness of his temper, but a rival in Antonia she could not endure; she therefore put in practice all the artifices of her sex, which soon led her to a just conclusion as to her late doubts; for she perceived that William's good humour or melancholy almost constantly took the turn of her practices of kindness or reserve with him. William, however, still made no profession of his love to her.

Antonia, who still more closely observed the young man, was still more at a loss to comprehend the situation of his heart, when an event entirely unveiled it to her.

William was absent from home for eight days, having visited a celebrated mine for

the purposes of his study. Madame Rautenbach employed Antonia to put his room in order: "For," said she, "it resembles the overthrow of Jerusalem. Put every thing in its place, Antonia; sort his papers and books, clean his writing table, and see if you cannot get the ink out." She herself tried all her keys, till she found one that opened the bureau; after which she committed the task to Antonia's care.

Great was Antonia's pleasure in this employment. She turned over, with delight, William's sketches and drawings. The written papers were chiefly mathematical problems, which she therefore arranged without further examination; but she found some notes on various historians, written with William's own hand. She read them with a heart bounding with lively emotion, for William eloquently expressed his horror of vice; his disdain of a fastidious virtue; and his love of generous and noble deeds. She had not before known the accuracy, as well as vehemence, with which he thought; still less had she

known

known how sensible his feelings were to tenderness, compassion, and the gentler virtues. She now pictured the youth with an elevated mind, vigorous, acute, and severe; yet generous and good.

Her sentiments were so perfectly in unison with his, that she said to herself—Ah! how can I forbear to love such a man!

Her task was now finished. She had selected a paper, which she pressed to her heart. Tormenting illusion! she connected it with herself! "He is mine!" she cried. "His heart was always destined to be mine!"

Yet this same packet contained no less than the sentence of her wretchedness. Her trembling hands could scarcely open it. She had read only a few lines, when she threw herself on the floor. From a state of stupefaction and despair, she was recalled by the entrance of Madame Rautenbach, who came to inquire what had prolonged her task to so unreasonable a time?

The paper was still in Antonia's hand,

but she hid it instinctively; and soon found a pretence to retire, and when alone, read the following—

"The immeasurable vault of heaven is spread over the head of an atom! I am lost in the immensity of space; nevertheless, Henrietta! Oh adorable woman! this eye, composed of the dust, discovers the brilliant *Sirius*; penetrates to scenes immensely removed. My mind embraces thousands of worlds. It is greater and more vast than Creation itself: the whole of Creation is its domain. It measures the universe; comprehends all existence; prescribes all its laws. I stand beneath innumerable worlds, which glitter over my head; they fall, they cease to shine, but I remain! My soul shall not be hid by the thick curtain which separates worlds, for it penetrates eternity with confidence!

"'Tis with thee, my beloved, that I long to enjoy this eternity! I adore thee! Those words raise me above all temporary and fragile matter. I adore thee! and thou shalt

shalt be mine! Never have my arms pressed thee to my heart; never has this heart beaten with transport against thine: yet thou art mine, Henrietta! although destiny should place immense seas between us; although death should separate us in this world, still thou art mine! I shall rise victorious with thee from the tomb! We will take our flight together through the heavens, while suns shall gild the flowing folds of thy robe!

" For what do I languish? What passion is it that draws tears from my eyes? What desire expands my breast? I wish for thy love! I wish for nothing beside. I am thine! Ah be thou mine! It is thy kisses, Henrietta, for which I pant. Let me fold thee in my arms! Let thy heart throb against mine!

" That beauteous bosom!—Will not that also be the prey of death? Will not those lips moulder in dust? those bright and lovely eyes be extinguished in the grave? Alas! if thou didst even now press me to thy heart, if thy lips were sealed

sealed on mine, would not the tomb open to separate us?

"*To be silent, and to die!* Henrietta, such is my fate. If I dared to speak, if a beneficent Providence permitted me to say to thee—Be mine! if, at these words, those resplendant eyes, glistening with love, turned upon him who pronounced those words; if thy bosom heaved with unusual palpitations; if thy hand pressed mine; if thy lips uttered—I am thine! Oh! I should expire with rapture! or if I survived that moment, Henrietta, my mind would lose the character with which thou hast reproached it; my soul would cease to be a stormy sea: joy, happiness, repose, would possess me wholly!

"Yes, my beloved! my heart is the victim of storms. Thou art the destiny of my life; it depends on thy will. Tranquillity is the gift of thy pure and gentle heart: Oh! when shall I possess it! Ah! may I hope, Henrietta, that thou wilt one day be mine?

"I perceive the neighbouring scene, which

which the moon yet faintly illumines, begins to be enveloped with clouds; they rise slowly, and gather into an immense canopy. I no longer can descry the house in which thou dost sleep. The resplendent *Sirius* no longer casts its rays upon me. Alas! if it is true that thou can never love me, Henrietta, then a dark and eternal cloud will envelope the heavens and all nature!

"When thou dost speak and thy breath reaches me, when thy hand is placed upon my arm, when thy robe touches my vestments, a sudden emotion agitates me. I prefer death to your indifference, Henrietta! From the whole world are the sentiments of my heart concealed: unhappy am I, if they are also concealed from thee; if thou dost not know by what irresistible necessity I am thine.

"Lately thou didst take an infant in thy arms; thy beautiful mouth was pressed on its lips: from that time the child was the object of my friendship; I gathered thy kisses from its lips, and pressed it to my heart,

heart, while tears fell from my eyes upon its unconscious head. He has reposed on thy bosom, Henrietta!—Ah! had I been that infant! if thou pressed me to thy bosoms! if my arms were thrown around thy celestial form!"

Antonia bathed the paper with her tears, all hope was rudely torn from her mind: ſhe had flattered herself that William would at length be repelled by Henrietta's indifference; but she now saw that he regarded her insensibility as a proof of the purity of her thoughts. She could no longer defend herself against an envy of Henrietta's fortune: "Of what a conquest has she robbed me!" ſhe exclaimed, "robbed me to adorn her vanity!" But her jealousy covered itself with a robe of generosity.—"Shall I," she said calmly, "behold a heart so noble, a mind so elevated, become the sport of a coquet, who knows not what love is? who laughs at him and his mode of happiness? No; it becomes me to inform him to what kind of woman he has given his affections.

Awake,

Awake, Antonia! I hear my grandfather cry, The father saved thee, do thou save his son!"

A few minutes served her to form a plan to display Henrietta's character to William: perhaps even she intended to place it in an unfavorable light.

In her imagination she then represented Henrietta confused, humiliated; but soon felt that she could not be the happier for that. Suddenly she cried, "That Henrietta may not suppose I am jealous of her, I renounce his love for ever. He never can be mine!" Exhausted by the shock of so many contending passions, and still more by the violent resolution she had taken, she fell back insensible in her seat. Returning to herself, she descended to the parlour, to sound the Collector, and to learn what sentiments he would entertain of William's marriage with Henrietta: for she hoped, that although the Collector was amused with Henrietta, she would scarcely be his choice for a daughter-in-law.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

ANTONIA GAINS A VICTORY OVER HERSELF.

AT the instant when Antonia opened the door, the Collector was saying, "Brother, I steadily maintain that there may be times when it is necessary to sleep with sentiments of anger in the heart; for, the object is to calm the eighth kind of nerve, *the Patheticum.* That nerve is united with the *Trachian* artery, the breast, the belly, and by the extending nerves with the arms and legs; and in proportion as it acts, irritability subsides. You cannot think, brother, what two hours of sleep will do."

"Brother," replied the Lieutenant, "I speak of the image of God, of the soul: and you, on the contrary, speak of that perishable being, the body. That may expect consolation from sleep, but the soul is not to wait for peace till the hands and feet are benumbed with sleep. Penitence is

is a work to be instantly performed. It is better to say, the sun shall not go down upon my wrath. It is the emotions of the mind, and not the sensations of the nerves, that are to be subdued. Good God! is it possible that you can be content that a man sleep with sentiments of hatred, rage, and vengeance in his heart! Ah brother! man ought to lie down on his bed, as he hopes one day to descend to his tomb. Repentance ought to spread its weeping veil over the man who is choleric and obdurate; till then sleep should deny him its beneficent aid."

"And hearts lacerated with vexation, brother?" said the Collector with great emotion.

"You are right, brother. I pray that sleep may spread his heavenly wings over eyes bedewed with tears; over hearts broken with sorrows; and over senses subdued by labour: but the hard heart should be enveloped only with a veil of repentance."

The Lieutenant pressed Antonia to his bosom

bosom by an involuntary movement. "I cannot but sigh when I reflect, my dear child, that so many men can see the sun go down, their hearts filled with hatred, without thinking on the last setting of the sun, on their short life!"

Antonia could not conceal her agitation. The Lieutenant's affecting words and manner wounded her deeply: she tore herself from his arms, and fled. When she had gained her chamber, tears came to her relief. As she raised her eyes, she saw the sun approaching the horizon; the Lieutenant's words sounded in her ears, and she acknowledged that Henrietta was not what she had lately pictured to herself: her aversion, she confessed, arose in great part from her envy and jealousy.

In the morning she awoke with sentiments of greater moderation, and in a temper to reflect tranquilly on her situation. Henrietta, it appeared, was entirely ignorant of William's love for her: no one could divulge it. Without appeasing her jealousy,

jealousy, these reflections calmed the trouble of her spirits, and even her anger was considerably abated.

The sun set for the second time after the Lieutenant's words, and Antonia felt still more strongly, her injustice towards Henrietta. "What crime," said she, "has the amiable girl committed? She converses, she dances, and she sings better than I do? She dresses with more taste, and is more accomplished. What crime is there in this? It is true that she not only ridicules every kind of enthusiasm, but makes a jest of the excessive love of virtue: yet she is gay, gentle, and ingenuous."

Antonia, thus fluctuating in feeling, then acknowledged Henrietta had too great freedom of manners for a woman, although men call it an innocent frankness; and she concluded with the conviction it was impossible William should be happy with Henrietta. But the Collector, in a subsequent conversation, destroyed even this last refuge of her jealousy. She had purposely turned the conversation on William,

reproaching

reproaching him with not loving the world, and attributing the fault to his unreasonable temper.

"That is true;" said the Collector coldly, "and at the same time it is false: every thing in the world has two handles. But with whom is it that William cannot live in peace? With his friends? Certainly he loves them with his entire soul."

"But," said Antonia, "if he should find his love not returned, which is but too frequent in the world?"—

"I hope that will not happen to him, and principally for this very reason, that he has an impassioned mind. But suppose that happens, he will learn to know and discriminate among men. I should indeed pity him, Antonia, if he were unfortunate enough to love a woman as romantic as himself: he stands in need of a colder and lighter temper, which may be a check in his sallies of imagination."

"He knows," added the Collector, "how to live with his friends, for he loves them; with his enemies, for them he pardons;

dons; with the weak, for he pities them. You see that he can live on terms with the whole world, but many will be unworthy of communion with his nobler sentiments. The vile man will fear him."

"That is precisely, my father, what I wished to say," replied Antonia.

"Blame then the world, and not William. They do not esteem him as he deserves; they do not love him as his heart desires. It is the world that is to blame. Were the bands of a sacred friendship to unite one human being to him, there is no sacrifice of which William is not capable."

"But, my father, you have said he is in danger of becoming unhappy."

"It is not an incapacity to form a union with men that will make him unhappy; but their vices will cause him unceasing affliction. Antonia, you do not know William. I love him almost as much as I love my brother; and that because of his noble nature, which requires nothing for himself, but gives all to others. He returns

turns the smallest instance of good-will, by an eternal love and friendship; at the slightest mark of confidence, he opens his whole heart."

This conversation deprived Antonia of every hope—even of the secret triumph of thinking that William would be happier with herself than with Henrietta. She hastened to her chamber with a mind disturbed and humiliated. At first, she would have persuaded herself that the Collector was mistaken; but had not William himself said, "*Thou art mine, Henrietta, although another should conduct thee to the altar?*" If, she said to herself, Henrietta does not deserve William's heart, she alone can make him happy, because he loves her so passionately.

This reflection inspired Antonia with a new desire: since she could not be William's, she conceived the generous idea of constituting his happiness, by promoting his union with Henrietta. She mingled with this idea, a secret vanity of which she was unconscious: since William could

not

not love her, it was now her passion that he should admire her as a superior being; that he should admire her for the magnanimity of her mind. Her conduct would be still more generous than that of the Countess Elizabeth. She considered herself as a being who no longer belonged to the earth, who constituted the happiness of another in an invisible manner.

Her generous plan was to mould Henrietta's heart into a form worthy of William's, and afterwards to unite them.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANTONIA'S PLAN.

SOME days after the return of William, the Pastor and the Collector, accompanied by the young people, visited the little wood and the chapel of the Countess Elizabeth. Antonia seated Henrietta beside William at the foot of the monument; while laying her own hand on the heart

of the statue, she silently made a vow to sacrifice her love to form the happiness of William. She then went out of the chapel to relieve, by unrestrained sighs, the oppression of her heart; and at the end of a few minutes, she returned with a serene air, and placed herself near to Henrietta. They soon continued their walk.

Antonia's manner throughout this day was far less pensive, less serious, than usual. She seized on every opportunity to display the talents of Henrietta, and constantly led the conversation to those subjects on which she knew her rival to be best informed.

Henrietta said to her father, "Antonia is not devoid of understanding. Her silence, which I used to think was the effect of her ignorance, is rather a virtue of her character. I have heard her to-day make very excellent remarks, and when she is disposed to be friendly, she is quite enchanting. You know I cannot endure the affectation of sentiment and pathos in a young

young person, but they are really pleasing in Antonia, because they seem to come from her heart."

"I rejoice to hear it," said M. Bellman; "if Antonia has good dispositions, your society and example may contribute to their improvement."

Antonia now visited Henrietta alone: they became very intimate, and daily formed a better opinion of each other. Antonia, indeed, still condemned the manner in which Henrietta thought of love and friendship; but when she spoke of these subjects with enthusiasm, Henrietta seemed to partake of her emotion.

At the end of some months, Antonia began to make William the theme of their conversations. She spoke of him with such fire, that Henrietta, smiling, asked her, if she was not enamoured of William?

"No," replied Antonia, with a decided, yet calm tone; "but I desire that your heart should become as susceptible as his."

"You profess to be my friend, yet wish me to lose my repose."

Antonia so often returned the panegyric of her brother, that Henrietta began to listen more attentively, and at length imagined that William made Antonia the medium by which to express his passion. She frankly avowed her suspicion.

"Would you," Antonia replied, "accept of a lover, who needs an interpreter to express his passion?"

"To what end are all these praises?—What is your design, Antonia, if you do not act by your brother's instructions?"

"If William burned with a secret flame for you, and dared not avow it, fearing to be rejected?"

"A secret flame! I never divined it."

"Henrietta, he loves thee—He loves, and he conceals his passion."

Henrietta blushed—"He loves me, you say, and conceals his passion. How then have you become acquainted with it?"

Antonia drew from her bosom the

written

written paper she had found in William's study, and having related in what manner she became possessed of it, and [illegible].

Henrietta read these pages with visible emotion. The enthusiasm with which they were written penetrated into her soul. A secret fire ran through her veins, and the artificial principles upon which she had hitherto founded her happiness were annihilated before this ardent and generous passion. She returned the paper to Antonia without speaking. The latter asked with emotion, "Are you displeased?"

"You know, Antonia," she replied, with an air of extreme embarrassment, and colouring deeply, "that so much enthusiasm is not to my taste."

Antonia precipitately returned the papers to her pocket, and said, "I will not speak to you any more of him."

At these words Henrietta threw herself into the arms of Antonia, pressed her burning cheek to hers, and murmured

 with

with her eyes full of tears, "I die with shame."

Antonia no longer doubted that Henther. A jealous pang pervaded her breast, but she stifled the envious passion in its birth, and calmly listened while Henrietta declared that the virtuous love of William had touched her heart hitherto insensible.

"What will you do to encourage him to declare his affection?" asked Antonia.

"Nothing; absolutely nothing," replied Henrietta, in a tone of agitation.

"Then William will not avow his sentiments." Henrietta sighed.

"I," resumed Antonia, "will speak to the Lieutenant of my brother's love for you; I will tell him that William is silent because he does not hope to be accepted. The Collector has already thought of settling William in the world, and has spoken of procuring him to be appointed a coadjutor in his office."

Henrietta fell into a reverie on the happiness

piness she should enjoy with the virtuous William—But ſhe remembered also the brilliant expectations her father had formed in her favour.

"You are in the right," said she at length to Antonia; "we ought to leave all these cares to our parents. It is enough that William loves me, and desires I should be his: he will find a time to tell me so."

CHAPTER IX.

ANTONIA INTRODUCES THE QUESTION.

MANY a bitter moment had Antonia endured while she thus followed her project of uniting William to Henrietta. Above all, the tranquillity she compelled herself to assume, caused her the most acute suffering. Heretofore she had regarded the sacrifice of the Countess Elizabeth, as the easy conquest of a generous mind over self-love; but now she learned by experience the anguish of such a sacri-

fice: ſhe now underſtood how difficult it is to sacrifice one's own happineſs to that of others.

The Collector's converſation again furniſhed her with the incentive to examine into the faithful evidences of virtue.

"That generous enthuſiaſm," ſaid he, "which ſeizes us when we hear related, or witneſs, the performance of a generous action, proves that we are in the practice of virtue."

Antonia interrupted him with precipitation. "This very enthuſiaſm may, perhaps, prove nothing but our vanity, and how much more we eſteem ourſelves than the great and virtuous man."

It was ſo unuſual for Antonia to contradict the Collector, that all eyes were fixed upon her in amazement.

"How, child!" ſaid the Collector, "what is it you aſſert?"

Antonia paused an inſtant, and then continued in an animated tone: "When we behold a great actor, or contemplate the work of a great artiſt, we are ſeized with

with a vehement enthusiasm for the arts, but that does not prove that we are able to cultivate them with success. The very perfection of the work we admire deceives us. In proportion as it is excellent, it appears to be easy of execution, and like children we exclaim—I could also do this! Some one has censured the Countess Elizabeth for the building of her chapel; but, my father, ought we not to consider that if there existed no chapels of this class, we should not be led to reflect how difficult it is to merit one."

"That is addressed to you, William," said the Collector. "Yes, Antonia, I acknowledge your argument to be just, although it overthrows an opinion of mine, of which I never before entertained a doubt. Thus we desire to be in the place of Socrates, that, like him, we may excite the praises and admiration of the world, without comprehending how far distant we are from any resemblance to that truly great man. But, Antonia, what has led you to make this remark? I am ready

ready to think that thou hast thyself, my child, experienced how difficult it is to merit such a chapel."

A glowing hue covered the cheeks of Antonia. She could not restrain her tears, and sought her chamber, where she might permit them to flow uninterruptedly.

"I am delighted," said the Lieutenant, "that Antonia has made that observation which has often been on the tip of my tongue, when you, brother, and William, have made the panegyric of a great action; and when the enthusiasm with which you both speak had dazzled and confounded me: I thank God who has made me such as I am."

"I suspect, brother," the Collector said, after a pause, "that among many persons, (with whom, I fear, I ought to class myself,) this virtuous enthusiasm is all the virtue they possess. We declaim with so much zeal, to prove to others that we are ready to sacrifice our life and our prosperity to promote a good cause, that we at length believe it ourselves. But the

the virtue of the truly great man consists in actions not in words."

Antonia, combating with her feelings, resolved heroically to persist in the project she had formed, yet shuddering and retreating from the moment which should irrevocably seal her destiny, delayed from time to time to discover to the Lieutenant the love of William for Henrietta : while the latter continually spoke of William, and by the vivacity of her manner, sought to prove to her friend how much she desired the immediate performance of her promise.

The Lieutenant, always dwelling with pleasure on the expectation of seeing William united to Antonia, one day addressed a few words to her, the tendency of which she fully understood. She took his hand and said, with visible emotion, "Ah, my dear uncle! It is time that I confess every thing to you."

"God grant, my child!" replied the Lieutenant, "that you bring me good tidings! Speak freely, my Antonia."

"William loves Henrietta." The Lieutenant was silent. "He loves her with passion. He has long loved her."

The Lieutenant knit his brows in displeasure, fixed his eyes for some moments on the ground, then rising from his seat, he quitted Antonia without speaking, and went to seek his brother in the garden.

"I have that to tell you," said he to the Collector, "which opposes our dearest wishes. Our children will not be united. William loves Henrietta Bellmann."

"Antonia's jealousy has fabricated this tale. She is herself in love with William."

The Collector, who relied entirely on the infallibility of his judgment in matters of love, would not retract his assertion. He called Antonia to him, and demanded the grounds of that information she had given the Lieutenant.

"William's passion for Henrietta was made known to me, by a letter which fell into my hands."

"Hum!"

"Hum!" said the Collector: "I suppose William has written about Henrietta's sparkling eyes, and you fancy God knows what of a fervent passion—(Antonia presented the letter to him). Oh ho! you bring your documents with you, it seems. 'Tis a pity, William and Henrietta are not listening to us. Have they charged thee, per chance, with this commission?"

In reading the letter, the Collector many times changed colour.

"According to this," said he, "it is indeed but too true; alas, I greatly fear William cannot be happy with Henrietta Bellmann."

Antonia demanded the reason.

"Because," said he, "though Henrietta is very amiable and attractive, she will be to this exalted being as water is to fire."

"Henrietta is not as cold as you imagine. I have seen her heart melt."

"I am not afraid that her father's systems have yet destroyed her heart," said the Collector: "but nothing is so dangerous

ous as to make a jest of virtue—this is the fault of Henrietta."

"My dear father, you have formed a very bad opinion of her."

"I shall be glad to be undeceived. For, I see clearly enough from William's disjointed expressions, that to reason with him would be thrashing straw for corn. God protect and guide them! Perhaps I foster a too great repugnance of the systems of the Pastor. I am indeed terrified at the thought of having such an affair to arrange with him. Brother, if I could manage it my own way, though I by no means approve of William's choice, I would only present Henrietta to him and say—She is thine!—But the Pastor first will demand four weeks to reflect upon it. Next he will say that William must have another employment, inasmuch as a collectorship does not equal the expectations Henrietta may reasonably form. It will then be necessary that I or you, brother Lieutenant, should deliver an account, in writing, of our receipts and disbursements; assur-

ing

ing the Pastor that we are men of honour, and moreover consider William as our son.—Yes—you are right, Antonia; William shall know nothing of the matter, till this tedious process be quite gone through."

"God grant them happiness!" ejaculated the Lieutenant. "Give me that epistle, brother, that I may read it in my turn."

"It is all poetry," said the Lieutenant; "I do not understand above half of it, but you know more of the stars than I do. On the wedding day we will put this letter upon his plate, it matters not if he should then say he will take his flight to heaven. *A robe gilded with stars*, would be truly a fine dress, would it not, Antonia?"

"It is a grand picture, you will tell me, brother Lieutenant, but it is falsely coloured; for if the stars are opaque bodies, they may contain other worlds, and he here wishes that his mistress should bear him to heaven in her train. In truth, all lovers talk nonsense."

CHAP.

CHAPTER X.

A PROPOSITION OF MARRIAGE.

ANTONIA informed Henrietta of the result of her conversation with the Collector. Henrietta thought it her duty to consult her father, and acquainted him with William's love for her.

"And how do you find your own heart disposed?" said the Pastor to his daughter.

"I am extremely surprised and affected," she said, "when I consider the courage with which he has concealed his passion from me. His character is firm and resolute: is not his silence a proof of his respect, as well as love for me? You are sensible, father, that his love can be of no other than an impetuous nature, yet so perfectly has he governed all his actions in my presence, that it was entirely hid from me."

"My dear Henrietta, speak to me frankly.

ly. I wish to learn how you are affected by this information."

"I well know this young man does not want talents, and that his prospects are equal to my wishes. I do not think the fervor of his character dangerous, but the more vehement his love is, the more does it become me to be mistress of myself, and to maintain the tranquillity of my own mind."

The Pastor shook his head at this conversation, but what had his own precepts left for him now to say to her? She did no more than practise the maxims he had so often impressed upon her mind. Henrietta was far, however, from being as indifferent as she affected to be. She was even on the point of acknowledging to her father, that she felt a tender interest in William's affection, but vanity mastered her sentiments; she was silent, and left it to her father to conduct this affair as he might think proper.

A few days after this conversation, the Collector called in at the Pastor's. The

conversa-

conversation turned upon various subjects, in the midst of which the Collector said abruptly, "I came, my dear friend, to inform you that William passionately loves your daughter. My brother and I, the parents whom God and virtue have given him, approve of his attachment, and if he is not indifferent to Henrietta Bellmann, you, I am sure, will frankly declare your sentiments to me."

The Pastor was much pleased with this laconic method of demanding his daughter. He made a long speech on the virtues, accomplishments, and amiable qualities of Henrietta, and undertook to prove to the Collector that she could not fail to render her husband happy.

"I do not doubt it," said the Collector impatiently.

The Pastor then drew a comparison between his daughter and William, to convince the Collector of the honour which would be done William by this union.

"I do not doubt it," replied the Collector, drily.

The

The Pastor continued his discourse in the same spirit.

The Collector still answered "I do not doubt it." Then uttering an involuntary eulogium on William, he concluded with these words: "Each is worthy of the other; I had never any doubt of that; otherwise, I should never have demanded your daughter for my William's wife."

The Pastor desired time to consider of his proposal.

"This answer," said the Collector, "according to the manners of the world, is nothing less than a refusal: give me a direct refusal; if that is your intention, I shall take it the more kindly to express it plainly; I love to know what I have to expect. William is near to my heart, and my anxiety disturbs my rest. If you really consent to their union, and you wish to know all that concerns William's prospects, I will readily and instantly make them known to you."

"It is my duty first of all to consult the inclinations of my daughter. My dear friend,

friend, you urge this matter with too much haste."

"I think you ought to make up your mind before [illegible] for if she, as I sincerely hope, has a regard for my son, and the marriage should not take place, she can reap nothing but vexation from this species of treaty. Let this secret remain between you and I; and permit me to ask you, expressly, if you have any thing to object to my proposal?"

"No; my friend, on the contrary, it is extremely agreeable to me."

"Well then, I begin with declaring to you, that I will make William my coadjutor."

"My dear friend, that may be called barring the door against his fortune. He has a very extensive knowledge of the mathematics."

"And I also understand the mathematics, yet I am very happy in my situation of collector. What more than happiness can he look for, in any other employ; for instance,

instance, as a commissioner in the department of the public mines?"

"Then, at least, he would have a title; that would place him in a more respectable situation in the world. I know that these things are indifferent to you, as, indeed, they are to me, but my daughter, my wife—"

The Collector fixed his eyes on the ground. "It will be a long time," he said at length, "before he can arrive at that dignity. He may be made a collector in eight days. I will give him half my appointments immediately, or even the whole. The situation you wish, will not yield him more, and the dignity is not much. William is not of a character to advance himself in the world. He will remain here as collector, and we shall have our children near us. They are both young. In due time we shall leave them in possession of what we enjoy. Their domestic happiness will not be interrupted by ambition. The tree, under the shade of which they played when children, under

der which as lovers, and man, and wife, they lavished innocent caresses, round which they saw their children sport before them, the same tree may, one day, serve them for a monument."

"You have often said, my dear friend, that man ought not to be the slave of the place of his birth. The world is his country. A life varied with good and evil will be his best tutor. The paternal house, you have often maintained, was not the proper abode of a young man: the incessant moral which he hears from his father and mother, render him the child of prejudice."

"I might have said things still more extravagant, in the heat of argument; but those laid aside, tell me, why should this young man be cast upon the world? If he even possessed the art, as difficult as it is degrading, of making his way by intrigue; if by the sacrifice of ten of the most precious years of life, and perhaps the additional sacrifice of his conscience, he should arrive to the situation of commissioner of

the mines; what will he have acquired?—a title! But I will purchase him the title of commissioner of the imposts. Come then my friend, consent to their happiness."

M. Bellmann defended himself stoutly against the Collector's suspicion, that he was too much attached to a title, which however, was the truth: but he was also in secret desirous that his daughter should pay a visit to the city, in which was the residence of the prince; and he insisted that his son-in-law should endeavour to push his fortune in the department of the public mines, or in some other department, that might lead to the kind of dignity he contemplated."

Such was the Collector's love for William, that he yielded to this arrangement, although with evident marks of sorrow. The Pastor then passed to the subject of the fortune that William would receive from the Collector, and Lieutenant.

"He is our child" said the Collector: "I think this declaration is sufficient."

"But, my dear friend, we must reflect that

that all are mortal; you will acknowledge that intentions may change."

The Lieutenant, in the kindness of his heart, had already provided for this suggestion of the Pastor.

"Brother," he said, "I am always embarrassed when any one asks me for a promise in writing. But the laws are right, in providing for the security of promises, in the case of death. If God should suddenly call us to himself, brother, what might become of these children? William and Antonia would be forced to wander in the desert like Hagar, with a morsel of bread. Your next of kin would seize upon your property; the same might happen with me. I advise you therefore; brother, if the Pastor should question you on this matter, to give him all the security he may demand."

The Collector's answer was therefore ready to the Pastor's intimation.

"Antonia and William," he said, "shall inherit my fortune, and my brother's. I will give you what security you may desire;

sire: but I would not have the children know any thing of this."

"I am of your opinion; and now, I think, we may by and by present the young people to each other, in contemplation of their future union. I may venture, I believe, to answer for my daughter's consent."

"I would rather take your daughter's hand, and lead her instantly to my son, and say, take your wife, her father follows to give you his blessing, and the affair is terminated. 'Tis true I have some interest; but, notwithstanding that, three or four years may linger on, before William is appointed a commissioner."

M. Bellmann replied, "Your son is certainly a young man of acute feelings, but he has also an ardent and expansive mind. The whole universe is too narrow for his range of ideas. What, I pray you, can satisfy him in this little village? Your employ does not furnish you with more than two or three days labour in a month; if I at all understand William's character aright,

aright, he has need of regular occupations. It is necessary even that he should have difficulties to contend with, and obstacles to overcome, that life itself may not become a burthen to him. Without doubt, for a little time, love would occupy him wholly, but you know very well love does not last always."

"Hum!" said the Collector, "I believe you are in the right; he shall depart from hence. If, however, nothing more considerable should fall in his way, he may always be sure of being appointed to a coadjutorship in my office."

They afterwards considered the propriety of acquainting the young people with the arrangements forming in their behalf, but the question was left undecided, and the Collector returned home.

"I told you," said he to his wife, the Lieutenant, and Antonia, "how it would be. There are an infinite number of things to be taken into the account of such an affair as this—settlements, pin-money, dowry, &c."

He

He then related the whole of his conversation with the Pastor, and it was agreed among them, at present, to conceal from William that Henrietta was destined to be his wife.

" You see, brother," said the Collector, " the affair is yet far from being terminated. The Pastor's objections have startled, but not convinced me: allowing that William could not find sufficient occupation in my office, what should prevent his pursuing agriculture, or studying mathematics, or engaging in some manufacture?"

" Brother," replied he, " the Pastor will yield to the intreaties of the young people."

" They shall not have recourse to them. William must depart. Two years passed in the great world will be useful to him; and who can tell what may then happen?"

The Lieutenant looked at Antonia, intent upon what she would say, but she spoke not aloud—To herself she repeat-

ed, "No he ought not to continue here—*who can tell what may then happen?*"

These were the words of the Collector, but she could not forbear to repeat them—They had awakened a new hope in her heart.

CHAPTER XI.

ANTONIA DESERVES A CHAPEL.

HENRIETTA related to Antonia, with an expression of perfect satisfaction, that every thing was arranged; that her father had, indeed, desired to delay the marriage, for their mutual benefit; but that he was ready to give up his plan, if the Collector, as he had proposed to do, would procure William to be immediately appointed commissioner of the imposts. She gave Antonia also to understand that she would do her a great pleasure in speaking of it to the Collector.

The day following she informed Anto-

nia

nia that the Pastor had further considered the matter, and was satisfied that an appointment to the imposts would do as well as being appointed to the department of the mines; that the inheritance of William would be very considerable; and that, on the whole, he was satisfied to compleat the marriage with as little delay as possible. He had even spoken of new modelling, and furnishing in a fashionable stile, the house belonging to the Collectorship; of engaging livery servants; and of purchasing two coach horses and a carriage.

Henrietta then turned to the anticipation of the happy days Antonia would enjoy dwelling under the same roof with her, as her sister-in-law; she did not fail either, to hint, with an air of condescension, how agreeable it must be to Antonia to have the prospect of an equipage at command.

These testimonies of kindness to her friend were considered only by Antonia as the ebullition of her vanity; and as soon as it was possible, she turned the conver-

sation to indifferent subjects, and afterwards took her leave.

She did not long nourish the displeasure she conceived against Henrietta.

"I am unjust," she said, "to Henrietta, because I still love William; and instead of tearing his image from my heart, I secretly nourish my disease, by encouraging even the weakest hopes that assail me. Did I not feel a tumultuous joy when I learned that the marriage of William was deferred for years? Has not hatred been ready to kindle in my breast, when Henrietta has announced its speedier termination?—God assist me!" she exclaimed after a long pause of reflection, "to consummate this virtuous sacrifice!—May he grant me power to sustain my feeble resolution, and direct me to that course, which will enable me to extinguish these delusive hopes for ever!"

Antonia, drying her tears, hastened to seek the Collector, and repeated to him the conversation of Henrietta; forbearing, however, to mention the new arrangements

ments of the household that were already contemplated by M. Bellmann and his daughter. She concluded with saying, "It depends now only on you, grandfather, to bestow on William immediate happiness."

Antonia, her heart lightened of its sorrow, went the same afternoon to the house of the *Syndic*. The young Biemann, son of the *Syndic*, was called an amiable young man. He possessed a small estate near the village. Antonia, who often visited his sisters, made an impression on the young Biemann; and having learned that she was prudent, and a good manager, he wished to obtain the consent of his father to make his court to her. The *Syndic* was very rich, and loved nothing so well as money. He had examined closely into the property of the Collector; and supposing that Antonia, as the Collector's granddaughter, would be his sole heir, he willingly allowed his son to pursue the bent of his inclination.

But no sooner had Antonia perceived

the design of young Biemann, than she rarely visited the daughters of the *Syndic*, and treated the youth with the utmost coldness.

On this afternoon her manner was wholly changed. She spoke to Biemann with entire complacency, and so transported was the youth with her kindness, that he seized upon a moment when they were accidentally left alone, to declare his passion—Antonia replied, "I depend upon my grandfather."

"Do you permit me to hope, amiable Antonia, that if the Collector approves my passion, you will not refuse me your hand?"

"Perhaps I ought not to answer that question; yet I will deal frankly with you, M. Biemann, and acknowledge, that if my grandfather commands, I shall obey."

In pronouncing these words, tears, in despite of her struggles, sprang from her eyes; M. Biemann received them as proofs of her love.

"Never," said Antonia to herself, as she

she returned home, "will I deceive this good young man. I will be mistress of my heart—I will love only him."

Her sacrifice was consummated.—Hope was extinguished. She wished to hasten her marriage. At first she secretly planned to acquaint the Lieutenant and William of her conquest over herself. She too had been ready to blame the monument and inscription of the Countess Elizabeth, but now she learned how much easier it was to act with generosity than to keep that generosity hidden. "Difficult, indeed, is it," she said, "to merit a chapel, but tenfold more difficult is it to forbear to build one."

Yet, even this triumph did Antonia obtain: she resolved not only to love and to marry young Biemann, but to hide from all eyes that it was the result of a self-imposed duty.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MOTHER IN-LAW.

ON remarking that the Collector had become unusually silent and thoughtful since her last conversation with him, Antonia imparted to the Lieutenant the new plans of M. Bellmann. The latter went instantly in search of his brother, to make an exposition on the proverb, '*Remain* in thy own country that thou mayest live honestly.'

" This good maxim," said the Collector, " will not bear a general application. Man is a cosmopolite,---a citizen of the world. If there was a road to the moon, Man would find it out. As I am an honest man, brother, William may not remain here, though I am obliged to conceal the reason."

Madame Rautenbach was, in fact, the cause of this vehemence of determination in the Collector; for, being in their own chamber,

chamber, she had talked to her husband of William's marriage, reckoned upon her future grand-children, and finished with exclaiming: "Who could have believed that the Pastor's daughter would, at last, smoke hams and make puddings, under my direction."

"Hum!" said the Collector, and fell into a reverie, from which he awoke to pronounce the following enigma: "When bees hive, they never suffer but one queen amidst them. Romulus and Tatius could not agree together. The two kings of Sparta acted in concert, but the Euphores were in fact the kings.—Leave me, dear wife."

"Blessed be the preserving genius of our domestic quiet," exclaimed he, "for this warning! A mother-in-law, a daughter-in-law, and a sister-in-law under one roof! What a household should we have!"

Nothing now would satisfy the Collector but that William should be commissioner of the department of mines if he married Henrietta.

The Lieutenant spoke not a word on the subject. Madame Rautenbach was for fixing the wedding day: Antonia dated the return of her own peace from the hour of William's marriage; Henrietta was docile, and her father was ready to give his consent the moment it should be asked; yet the Collector still replied, "William shall be commissioner in the department of the public mines." To put an end to the entreaties that daily assailed him, he took William to his chamber.

"Listen to me, my son, with patience, I think I am addressing a man. You love Henrietta Bellmann; I have known it several weeks; I desire only your happiness; I went to the Pastor and demanded his daughter for you."

"Oh God!" cried William, as the colour forsook his cheeks.

"I thought only of accomplishing the marriage without delay. I resolved to deliver up my office to you; but the Pastor---"

"He refused me!"

"He

"He did, for the demon of titles had taken possession of his brain. In a word, he insisted that you should have a situation in the department of the mines, and rise to the rank of commissioner before you are married; but we can manage this otherwise."

"I do not understand—"

"Two years is a long time to wait, I thought to myself, but that may be avoided."

"Ah! God!" William cried, blushing and trembling with joy.

"The time necessary to procure the title of commissioner would perplex me extremely, but, suddenly, Antonia informed me that Henrietta's parents no longer insisted upon that condition."

"No longer insisted on it?"—

"Would no longer insist on seeing you commissioner of the public mines, and that they would consent to celebrate the wedding in six weeks, or even sooner—William, what ails thee?—Nay, child, do not stifle me with thy embraces."

"Oh,

" Oh, go on, go on—In six weeks, or even sooner—?

" Just so; that is the will of the parents of Henrietta, of the Lieutenant, of my wife, of Antonia, but I—I oppose it."

" You! my father!—Oh, do you oppose the only happiness I can ever enjoy?"

" But, William, hear me to the end. Is it not more honourable to you to merit the hand of Henrietta? What have you done as yet that is worthy of her, or meritorious to yourself? I have all the reason in the world to suppose that Henrietta wishes to dwell in some great city, and not be confined all her days to this obscure village."

William was of a different opinion.

" But if it be so," he said, " that can be very well accomplished after we are married; the president of the public mines has already offered to make me a secretary in that department whenever there shall be a vacancy."

" Mr. Secretary will never have the Pastor's daughter, depend on it: not even as

as Collector would he accept you, William. I, it seems, must buy you the title of commissioner of the imposts."

"Buy it! Henrietta cannot require that."

"But her father does, and she follows him; all, indeed, are willing, but the Lieutenant and me—We both find something in it that displeases us; nevertheless, the Pastor will not consent to give you his daughter on any other condition."

"But what says Henrietta?"

"Naturally enough; whatever her father pleases. He says, you must have the title of commissioner of the imposts, and she says———"

"I wish only to know if she loves me?"

"I believe she does; because she is willing to marry you. 'Tis true we have all been occupied with thinking of thy love, and never enquired about hers."

"At least, my father, it is but an innocent fantasy, that of wishing me to be called commissioner of the imposts."

"It would inflict much chagrin on the Lieutenant, that you should treat this demand

mand so lightly before him. He said to-day, William ought to know whether it is himself that Henrietta desires, or merely a commissioner of the imposts. He thinks, my son, that no man ought to submit to such conditions."

William cast his eyes on the ground, and was some time silent, and at length resumed with,

"You have something more to say, my father?"

"Yes, I have. You can easily represent to yourself the joy with which my wife anticipates the moment that shall bring your bride under her roof, and she is at present perfectly sincere; yet some words have escaped her that wounded me deeply, and led me to reflections which I find necessary to communicate to you.—A mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law in the same house, especially when beforehand they have been in opposition to each other!——You cannot be happy, William, if domestic concord flies us; and that will inevitably happen."

"Fly

"Fly from persons so good?" asked William with a smile.

"Water falling drop by drop, in time will wear away the hardest marble. The flame of domestic discord may have consumed our happiness while we are looking around us, and saying—How can this be? My wife and Antonia will form one party; your wife and her mother will form another. To whichever side we men incline, we shall but feed with oil the flame. Your young wife will desire to change this or that part of the household management, and the less important these things are in themselves, the more tenaciously will they be upheld—They would reciprocally pardon faults and bad habits in each other, but in household affairs will each have dominion. Recollect, William, we have already been embroiled with the Pastor's family, and the cause--Was it not the ill-will of my wife, and the wife of M. Bellmann?—These two will, by the event of your immediate marriage, be brought daily in contact. If they should again disagree,

agree, will not Henrietta take up her mother's quarrel? and then——"

"It is necessary that I become a commissioner in the department of the public mines," said William, in a resolute tone.

"Not absolutely that, but it is necessary that you quit the village for a year, or till I can buy or build me a house, and have persuaded thy mother that it is best for her and me, that I should entirely quit the collectorship, and consequently resign the house that belongs to it. If you have nothing to object to my proposition, do not speak of it till I have brought it to bear."

"Father, your peace is dearer to me than all the world. I am henceforth silent, and leave all things to your guidance."

When William followed the Collector into the parlour, his agitation and his varying countenance betrayed the subject of their secret conference. Shortly, Madame Rautenbach drew him aside, and pressing him to her heart, said, with great emotion,

emotion, that his love for Henrietta would render her truly happy, did not the Collector seek to defer the marriage. "My brother, the Lieutenant," she added, "agrees with me. Think what an affliction your departure from hence must be to the poor Henrietta. (William sighed.) "Dear child, we muſt prevent this grief, and, thank heaven, it can be easily managed. You must appear severely dejected for three or four days, and your father's opposition will never more be heard of—Go, go—rely on my word, and console Henrietta. You will have your wish, depend on it."

Antonia had approached, and applauded Madame Rautenbach's counsel.

"Your father," said she, "will yield to your prayers; I know he will. Be commissioner of the imposts, and marry directly.—My dear brother, we have promised Henrietta this, in your name. Already have I called her sister."

"And I have already given her the tender name of daughter."

"Ah!

"Ah!" sighed William, "I must still be silent."

"Take our advice, brother—What ails you? Your marriage with Henrietta is all the question, and you seem as if you were in a dream. How will she understand your conduct? Will it not be taken for indifference, or, perhaps, contempt? Rouse yourself, dear brother. Go to Henrietta, and all will be well."

"You know my husband's character perfectly, William, and I give you my counsel with entire confidence; because the good Lieutenant is quite of our opinion."

"Is he, indeed?—are you sure he is of that opinion?" asked William with much emotion.

"Without doubt, he confesses it to Antonia; but then his brother's influence over him is great; if the Collector seriously insists on your being commissioner of the mines, the Lieutenant may then——"

"Spare me, mother! I beseech you, spare me!—Am I awake!—Henrietta loves me!

me!—her parents consent she shall be mine—Oh God!——"

"Within a month she may be your wife, if you have courage, dear William. You must see her this very day."

"Dear sister, no more. My resolution is immoveable. I will not see Henrietta. I will be commissioner of the mines ere I see her, or I destroy for ever the happiness of my life."

"Is it possible? Can William act thus?"

"I am resolved, Antonia. You cannot shake my purpose," said William, as he quitted the apartment.

Antonia went to join her grandfather: he burst into a laugh at the disconcerted air she had assumed. "Well," said he, "you have all assailed William, but I think you will not subdue him. Be satisfied of that, and if you must negociate, my dear, find a more pliant subject.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GORDIAN KNOT.

ON the following morning, when the family were all assembled at breakfast, a letter was delivered to the Collector.

"Mutual confidence," said he, "prevents most of the evils of life;" and, breaking the seal, he read the letter twice, and laid it beside him on the table, without uttering another word. Presently Antonia rose to quit the room.

"It is precisely your presence that is most necessary here, Antonia," said the Collector. "Methinks a fatality governs our house. The contents of this letter may be no surprise to you, but to me it is a very great one."

Every person looked at Antonia, who retired to a seat in extreme confusion.

"Do you love young Biemann, Antonia?"

"Yes," she replied in a firm voice, after some

some moments of silence, " I do love him."

" Repeat it again, Antonia, and I will then tell you the contents of this letter. Who shall cut this Gordian knot? You love young Biemann with all your heart?"

" Yes," said Antonia, somewhat subdued.

" And what of wrong is there in that?" asked the Lieutenant, " you know no evil, brother, of young Biemann?"

" So much the harder, brother. He is a civil well-built young man, that is all I know of him?"

" He is a good man, brother, with whom Antonia will be very happy."

" So much the harder. If we knew any evil of him, Antonia would not desire him. This letter will give you, brother, your full share of perplexity—Here is a labyrinth without a clue—The more I look on the knot, the harder I find it to untie. Read, brother, read."

The

The Lieutenant, having read the billet, shook his head, and laid it on the table.

"Well?" asked the Collector.

"It is indeed a difficulty, but I hope we may be able to arrange the matter."

"Never, never. You do not know the old *Syndic*, if you believe it possible."

Antonia listened in amazement and alarm.

"For the love of God!" exclaimed Madame Rautenbach, "explain yourselves. What is the matter?"

"Listen," said the Collector; "William loves Henrietta, you all know how well. The Pastor consents to the marriage upon (among others) a condition that I have never yet named to my brother; namely, that William divides with Antonia my property as well as the Lieutenant's. From this preliminary he will not depart. Antonia loves young Biemann; for the confirmation of which you need only read her countenance. The *Syndic* demands her for his son, stipulating that I and my brother, knowing her to be our nearest

relation,

relation, do engage to make her sole heir to our joint possessions. If we cannot, he writes, agree to this proposition, he cannot incline to the marriage. Behold in few words the cause of my embarrassment."

The Lieutenant threw a glance sideways on Antonia, and, to his great astonishment, observed that she seemed to have recovered her composure. He turned to look at William, but found not upon him any marks of inquietude or sorrow; on the contrary, an animated glow suffused his cheek, and his eyes sparkled with unusual fire.

"Brother, will you untie the knot?" said the Collector.

Antonia and William, at that moment rising promptly, left the room by different doors. The Collector motioned to stop them, but the Lieutenant prevented him.

In half an hour William and Antonia met in the vestibule, and smiled as each presented a hand to the other. "The Gordian knot is already untied, Antonia," said

William, with a sigh he could not restrain.

" Yes, my dear brother," Antonia returned with chearfulness, " it is untied. Be happy, William."

" I am happier than I ever was," said he, " for I now know how much I love my sister." He folded Antonia in his arms with a fervent embrace.

When Antonia had regained her chamber, she felt a difficulty of respiration— Happiness and misery blended themselves in her heart.

Approaching the Collector, she blushed: " My father!" said she, " I said I loved M. Biemann with all my heart, but——"

" Did you not speak the truth?" asked the Collector.

" I approve him, but that is all. Do not imagine it a sacrifice, if I——"

" Excellent, generous girl!" exclaimed the Lieutenant, pressing his lips to her burning cheek.

" Are we not blessed in children, brother?" the Collector demanded: " a mo-

ment longer, and William in his turn comes to asure us he does not love Henrietta as passionately as he imagined. Noble, generous girl! You are about to bid me refuse the *Syndic*. You would sacrifice your own happiness to confirm your brother's."

The truth of these words pierced the heart of Antonia, and a profound sigh agitated her bosom.

"Thinkest thou, dear Antonia, to hide from us the extent of the sacrifice thou hast designed? No, dear Antonia, it is not for thee to untie the knot."

"I can. I ought. I will.—It is untied —I do not love M. Biemann!"

"Convince William of that, then we may be believe it!"

"I take God to witness I never loved M. Biemann."

"Antonia," cried the Lieutenant eagerly, "do not call God to witness! Be not perjured!"

Antonia made new protestations, but the two brothers said,

" We read on your countenance, that which you would deny with your lips. This knot, dear child," continued the Collector, " is indissoluble."

Antonia finding her remonstrances ineffectual, willingly retired, when the brothers signified their desire to be left alone.

" William will not be long behind her, dear Lieutenant. Would you believe, that I dread to enter into a contest with this boy on the subject? He will tell me—Antonia is your grand-daughter; she has claims on you that cannot be superseded. Her rights are determinate. If he cannot untie the knot he will cut it. Already, methinks, I hear him exclaim—Are we both to become miserable? Is it not more just that one should be rendered happy?"

" And how will you answer him, brother?"

" I will say to him, William, consult with Antonia. Decide together. Whatever you agree upon I will approve.— "But they will never come to an agreement upon

upon this point. Each will decide for themselves."

"Unhappy case!" said the Lieutenant, sighing deeply. "God in his mercy direct us!"

"He will, my brother, in his own due time, depend on it. If it was not rather out of season, I would turn preacher, and exhort you to leave things just as they are. In a year or two, perchance, they may change for the better."

At every footstep that approached the door of the room where they sat, the Collector and Lieutenant looked eagerly round, expecting to behold William; but William came not. At dinner his place at table was unoccupied, and at supper they still vainly expected him. The Lieutenant became very uneasy.

"Who can tell even if we may see him to-morrow?" said the Collector. "I anticipate the manner in which he would persuade us to marry Antonia—He understands in what manner I should reply to him—He feels that I would say, Obtain

first the consent of Henrietta, then I will talk with thee."

William did not return that night, nor the next; but, as he had once or twice absented himself from home for two or three days and nights together, though anxious, they were not alarmed.

At the end of four days the Collector received a letter. "It is from William," he cried, as he tore away the seal.

Scarcely had he read the few first lines, when he exclaimed, in a faltering accent, "He returns no more!"

Astonishment pervaded every face—They listened in breathless silence for a further explanation, but the Collector dropping the letter, leaned forward on his seat, as if overcome with pain. "My dear husband," cried Madame Rautenbach, "why that sigh?"

"What does he say, brother?" asked the Lieutenant.

The Collector endeavoured in vain to read the letter, and at length handed it to the

the Lieutenant, who with a trembling voice read aloud as follows:

"You judge aright, my father. The knot cannot be untied, it must be cut, and I alone ought to cut it. I trust that from the moment in which you apprised us of the contents of the *Syndic's* letter, you would understand what must be my unalterable resolution. Could I have hoped to prevail on you to set aside all other considerations to complete the happiness of Antonia, I had remained a joyful witness of her happiness; but from you, and from her, I dared not hope to obtain this concession. That which I could do, it was my duty to do, and that I have done. I have quitted your dwelling, and you will never again hear of me till Antonia is the happy wife of Biemann. I will not deny that this sacrifice has cost me dear; but you, my father, will feel it was my duty. I owed it to honour, to virtue, and to the peace of your heart.

"God grant that Antonia may be speedily united to her lover. Tell her, that I

 know

know thegenerosity which her soul has conceived. The morning of my departure I read the noble design in the fire of her eyes; I felt it in the tenderness with which she embraced me. I have not acted generously, I have only been just.

"Be not uneasy respecting my fate. I have taken with me a sum of money, which I had accumulated from your numerous bounties; before that sum shall be exhausted, I will find the means of successful labour.

"Be happy! my parents, my friends! Blessings rest on you, and all your house! We shall yet be restored to each other.—Farewell! WILLIAM."

The Lieutenant, after a long silence, rose with composure, and said in a loud voice—"He sojourns in a strange land, but God is with him. The reward of a good action is in his heart, and he will not fail!"

"Dear Lieutenant, he has done his duty. In his place, I hope, I had done the same. He has untied the knot, he has not cut it."

"'Tis

"'Tis true, my brother, he has untied it with confidence in God, and in himself. But let us be of courage; happiness is in store for us."

"God grant it," said Antonia with a deep sigh, for she thought only of the grief of being the cause of William's departure.

CHAPTER XIV.

ANTONIA'S HOPES.

IT was soon clamorously reported in the village, that William had absconded, with a large sum of money belonging to the Collector. This tale made very different impressions on the two houses of Bellmann and Biemann. The Pastor and his family absented themselves carefully from the house of the Collector, lest their visit should be attributed to curiosity, a common failing which they affected greatly to disdain; and the Collector was extremely well satisfied, not to receive them, for he knew

knew not exactly how to reply to M. Bellmann's probable enquiries.

After some time, Henrietta met Antonia, and hazarded a few remote questions, which were answered so vaguely, and with such an air of embarrassment on the part of Antonia, that Henrietta ended the conversation, secretly determined never to renew it.

A second letter was addressed by the *Syndic* to the Collector, in which he hoped, that, as the only obstacle which could prevent M. Rautenbach and his brother from naming Antonia their heir, was now removed, his son would be speedily put in possession of all his wishes.

The Collector presented the letter to Antonia, who slightly looking it over, answered, "I will not marry M. Biemann."

The Collector reminded her of William's determination. She still replied, "I cannot marry him."

The Lieutenant and Madame Rautenbach next represented to her that William would never return to the paternal roof, until

until she was the wife of Biemann.—Still she was unmoved.

The Collector waxed angry. He called her a capricious obstinate child. He threatened to take no account of her will, but immediately to arrange the marriage with the *Syndic.*

Antonia in the accent of grief replied, "Give my hand to M. Biemann, if you will that it be so, but be assured, my father, you will not secure my happiness. I do not love M. Biemann; and I have never loved him.—Surely I am punished beyond my deservings!"

"You do not love him? You never loved him?" exclaimed the Collector—then turning to the Lieutenant, he added—"Brother, this is another attempt to thwart our design. She loves him certainly, what else could have before induced her to avow it?—Well—I am resolved to dispose of your hand."

Antonia fell on her knees. "It is you then, my father—It is you who force me to confess—that—I—I love William!"

The Lieutenant, the Collector, and Madame Rautenbach were silenced as by a clap of thunder at this confession.

Antonia related the origin and the progress of her sentiments—her struggles and her sorrows; and her final resolution of ending the bitter conflict by devoting herself to M. Biemann.

" Oh that William beheld this scene!" said the Collector.—" Henrietta will not have him without an inheritance, she follows her father's lead. Come let us haste to finish with the *Syndic*—Dear child of my heart! We shall find him again, Antonia —the dear fugitive—perhaps we shall soon chaunt our *Te Deum Laudamus.*"

Antonia blushed: she understood the Collector's wish, and a lively and serene hope filled her heart.

The Collector seated himself at his desk to write to the *Syndic*, to whom in the gaiety of his present contentment he said: " He was not accustomed to dispose of persons without their own participation; that his grand-daughter was worthy of being

being loved for herself, and that he would advise the *Syndic* to lay his propositions before her."

The *Syndic* was enraged, and uttered between his teeth, "*you shall repent of this.*" He then drew from among his papers the proceedings of a suit, instituted against the Collector for some part of his conduct in his office, but which had terminated entirely to his honour; he turned them over, and marked several parts with a cross; after which he restored the papers to their former place. While he thus reflected on the means of taking vengeance on the Collector, the latter was at table with his family, and all, even Antonia, contemplated with delight the fugitive's return, indulging hopes of happier days.

CHAP. XV.

HENRIETTA DISPLAYED UPON THE THEATRE OF THE WORLD.

THE Collector now sought an interview with M. Bellmann, and related to him the motives of William's departure.

"Yet I have heard," said the Pastor, "that you have refused your grand-daughter's hand to young Biemann."

The Collector was not willing to confess the whole to M. Bellmann, yet could not refrain from applauding the generosity of Antonia, which, together with some expressions Madame Rautenbach let fall, soon unveiled the entire truth to the Pastor and his family.

Henrietta was at first inconsolable for the loss of William—she persuaded herself she had loved the wanderer, and uttered her plaints of his absence and her despair with the prettiest graee imaginable; all the world must have believed her sincere;

cere; but it happened in a short time, that she had so many other things to engage her time and attention, she was obliged to forget her love and her sorrows.

Bellmann had a sister of whom he rarely spoke, and always in an indirect manner. In her youth she possessed uncommon beauty, and attracted the attention of a young prince, whose mistress she became. After some years of love and satiety, he married his mistress to one of his under secretaries, and bestowed on him the title of counsellor of state. The prince died prematurely, and the administration was changed. The counsellor having already acquired a handsome fortune, and desirous to obtain an honourable place in society, determined on quitting the country, and establishing himself where the disgrace attached to his marriage would be utterly unknown. His wife could never pardon her brother the severe reproaches he had addressed to her on the subject of her connection with the prince, and during a number of years, she neither interested

rested herself about him or his family; but her husband and her only son dying within a short time of each other, she ooked upon her misfortune as the punishment of her past errors, and resolving to make her peace with heaven, she sought to reconcile herself to her brother.

To this end she addressed a letter to the Pastor, expressive of her penitence, her sorrows, and humbly entreating to be restored to his affection and his counsels; to the guidance of which she devoted her future days.

M. Bellmann, who was very little acquainted with his sister's circumstances, considered this letter as an application for assistance in a reverse of fortune; he answered her with great kindness, promising to come himself, as soon as his affairs would permit, and endeavour to give her the best advice he could, as to what it would be fit for her to do in her present situation. A few days after that, he departed with his family to the place of her residence. On the road he recommended

to

to his wife to treat with gentleness a penitent and unfortunate woman, and besought her not to reproach his sister with her poverty.

It is not easy to express the Pastor's astonishment, when on enquiring for his sister's habitation, he found it a magnificent palace; a domestic in a rich livery ushered him to his sister's presence; his surprise encreasing at the elegance and grandeur of the apartments through which he was led. His sister eagerly advanced to meet him, drest in a manner that displayed equal taste and wealth; she received him with perfect ease and dignity, and with all the marks of a sincere joy; but in their conversation she said not a word of repentance, nor of a life of retirement. He had composed a speech for their interview, which he had seasoned with a few moderate reproaches, but his speech vanished the moment he cast his eyes upon her.

As he informed her that he had brought his family with him, she sent her carriage

to

to the inn where Madame Bellmann and Henrietta had remained, requesting that they would make her house their home.

At first sight she was extremely pleased with her niece, and instantly expressed a wish that she would live with her. "I am not mistaken, I have your consent, brother; my sweet angel, you will stay with me, will you not?"

The Pastor neither answered yes, nor no, but Henrietta betrayed the most lively desires, in the midst of the most lively caresses.

The aunt led her to her dressing room, to attire her in a more fashionable stile, which was not difficult, as her niece was exactly of her height, and Henrietta put herself into the hands of the *femme de chambre* with the same ease, as if she had been accustomed to such attendance the whole of her life; the aunt presiding over this important task. Meanwhile the Pastor and his wife consulted on what would be prudent in this unexpected situation, and concluded it would be a foolish indifference

ference to the prospect of a splendid career for Henrietta, to reject the aunt's offer; she having several nephews and nieces, among whom she had only to choose a favourite: in a word, that very night, it was determined Henrietta should remain with her aunt.

The Pastor could remain only two days with his sister, the duties of his cure not permitting any longer absence; before his departure, he exposed to his daughter, in a long discourse, the dangers of her new situation; she replied with a smile, "It would indeed sensibly afflict me, if you really thought these admonitions necessary. I receive them as marks of your paternal tenderness, but you might have been equally tranquil respecting my conduct, if you had ventured to leave me without them."

Her father bade her adieu with a tender embrace, and her mother shed a profusion of tears.

The aunt had expected to find in her niece, a simple country girl; her surprise was

was extremely great at seeing how much Henrietta was accomplished; that she took every form which fashion could impress, and that she had an air and carriage that could not at all have been expected from a provincial town. She placed her before a piano-forte, giving her a difficult sonata. "Bravo, child!" she exclaimed in rapture, "you want nothing but taste in your execution, and that you will soon acquire." Henrietta secretly smiled at this praise, for her aunt could not play two bars together; however, she was afterwards obliged to acknowledge, that her aunt was seldom wrong in her judgment, as to the execution of another.

One day, accident put Henrietta upon playing the philosopher; and the argument she maintained was in fact very just; but her aunt cried aloud, "Any thing, my dear Henrietta, except pedantry; pedantry would make the goddess of beauty herself detestable. The study of women should be to adorn their persons, and cultivate their wit; be as witty as you please, but,

for

for God's sake, never appear to be learned."

Henrietta soon felt that her aunt's counsel was at least useful; she studied to heighten every agreeable talent she possessed; she saw the works of the greatest masters in the fine arts; she learnt to speak of them in the currrent language of taste, and made a rapid progress in singing and dancing. Her aunt frequently gave concerts, which were attended by the most celebrated amateurs. In the first of these which was given after her arrival, Henrietta was seated beside her aunt, when a young man, elegantly dressed, entered the apartment, and approached the mistress of the house as an old acquaintance; he looked at Henrietta, and stood, as if instantly struck dumb. "My niece," said the aunt, with a smile of secret triumph.

"Your niece!" exclaimed the young man, "I could have sworn that she was a young lady whom I knew when a boy."

Henrietta blushed, for at the first word she had recognized the voice of the lover

of

of her infancy—of Rhodolphus. "M. Buchling!" she said.

"Mademoiselle Bellmann!" He kissed her hand respectfully.

"You are acquainted then!" said the aunt.

"Long since," replied Henrietta, "M. Buchling was the dearest friend of my childhood."

"I rejoice to hear it," said the aunt, "he is also my particular friend." She then went to speak to some person in another part of the room.

Henrietta remained alone several minutes with Rhodolphus, and related to him, in few words, the circumstances which had brought her to this house.

Rhodolphus had resided several months in the same city which the aunt of Henrietta inhabited before her arrival. Upon his first quitting the village, he had travelled as a teacher of the violin, and in that profession he had amassed a tolerable sum of money. But he no longer played the humble part of a music master. It had

been his good fortune to render an important service to a Russian prince, who had granted him a pension, which, joined to his former savings, and managed with economy, was sufficient to support him in a genteel independency. Being also a very handsome and amiable man, he had many friends, and was well received in the most considerable houses of the city.

After the overture, Buchling was called on to accompany Henrietta on the piano-forte; he said, in a low voice, " Ah! with what delightful remembrances do I to-day take my violin." Henrietta blushed, for she also had her remembrances.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XVI.

HENRIETTA AND RHODOLPHUS.

IN the evening, when left alone, Henrietta threw herself on a sopha, and fell into a profound reverie. The past, with all the tender sensations of her youth; the dazzling eclat of her present situation, and the flattering hopes her vanity fostered for the future, successively presented themselves to her imagination. At one moment she found herself seated side by side with Rhodolphus, in the little summer-house of her father's garden, his arm round her waist, while he repeated vows of love to her ready ear—At the next, she was smiling tenderly on William in the Collector's parlour—and now, transplanted to the magnificent saloon of her aunt, surrounded with a crowd of admirers.

She went to bed, and her sleep was visited by an enchanting dream, retracing also the pleasures of her infancy, and displaying

playing the brilliant perspective of her future path.

Will these agreeable illusions be realised? thought she, as she rose in the morning. She seated herself at her mirror, and confessed she deserved to attain her highest hopes. She sat down to the piano-forte, and sung an Italian arietta, upon the enjoyments of life. The hour approached in which she expected Rhodolphus, who had engaged to visit her this morning.

"How amiable he is!" said she, "he first touched my heart, and alas! I feel these impressions are not yet effaced. Yesterday evening I could not repress the pleasure his appearance gave me—and why should I seek to repress it? A tender heart is surely the source of all enjoyments."

Rodolphus arrived. He too had had his reveries. They talked together with the familiarity of old acquaintance—made pleasantries on their former sentimental interviews, and separated at the end of an

hour, with a promise speedily to meet again.

Henrietta thought she perceived through the affected levity of Rhodolphus, strong indications that the passion he had entertained for her, was not effaced from his heart; and Rhodolphus on his part was equally sanguine, respecting Henrietta.—Vanity made them each her dupes; each believed the conquest perfect on their part, and waited impatiently for the moment of triumph.

The beauty of Henrietta, now in its highest lustre, her talents and accomplishments, rendered her the object of general admiration. It is not astonishing, therefore, that the almost extinguished passion of Rhodolphus should revive under the daily influence of her charms, and increase under the auspices of her encouragement.

Henrietta also became sensible of new impressions in favour of Rhodolphus. He had mixed largely with the world. His association with men of rank and elegance, in the different countries he had passed through,

through, had given a graceful finish to his manners. He was become a complete adept in the art of pleasing; and, without intending to play the hypocrite, he had always something flattering to address to every ear. If he disputed, it was with a moderation that generally ensured him success, but in that very success he found the means of gratifying the self-love of his adversary, who might be vanquished, but not humiliated. With these captivating powers, he rose to distinguished favour among men, his company was solicited every where, and was received as an honour. Henrietta was not slow to observe his advantages, or his distinctions. She smiled when she recollected that it was Rhodolphus Buchling and Henrietta Bellmann, who sustained these distinguished parts upon the theatre of fashion; and she avowed to herself, with a gentle sigh, that Rhodolphus was most worthy to be loved; and that she could be truly happy to be his.

Each fostered the same views on the other,

other, but they yet approached no nearer. They were familiar, but not tender; and testified no feelings but those of respect and friendship.

Rhodolphus grew jealous of all the men who approached Henrietta, but he hid his jealousy with extreme care. His visits became more frequent, and he particularly sought admittance when no other company was expected; and on those occasions was uncommonly entertaining: and always directing his efforts for their amusement, as much to her aunt as to Henrietta, he was at all times received with the greatest complacency.

Henrietta and Rhodolphus were often left alone, while her aunt went out to make purchases, or pay a formal visit; and these tête-à-têtes were in no small degree dangerous. By degrees they ceased to be gay, and their conversation assumed a sentimental garb. The days of their childhood were remembered with a mutual sigh, and a pause.—At length Henrietta perceived the snare that spread beneath

neath her feet, and restrained Rhodolphus within the limits he had been on the point of overstepping. Rhodolphus disguised the chagrin her prudence caused him, was the first to laugh at himself, and assumed an air of the most perfect and easy carelessness. Henrietta, a little piqued at his ease, employed the most refined address to secure her conquest.

This management on both sides did not last long. Passion took the lead. Henrietta observed Rhodolphus to become hourly more ardent and tender. She was gratified with her triumph, but cautious not to suffer him to make advances that did not accord with her plans, for she had determined not to enter into any engagements with him till she received the sanction of her aunt—Of that she never entertained a doubt, because Rhodolphus was so much the favourite of her aunt: yet to her utter astonishment, she received the following answer:

" Buchling is a very amiable young man, and very worthy to be loved—I have the

highest opinion of his good sense and his discretion; but, my child," she continued, "he is not for you. He must marry a rich widow—had he a title indeed—and that may yet be possible. The portion I intend for you is considerable, and must satisfy you as well as your family. My fortune shall smooth all difficulties that lie in the way of your forming a great marriage."

"A rich widow indeed!" said Henrietta to herself, with extreme vexation, "and why not a rich girl?"

The aunt of Henrietta, however, after this declaration, was a little more solicitous to watch the conduct of the young people than before. It was her maxim to regard appearances; on that point she was strict and scrupulous, but no further. She was capable of saying to Henrietta, "you cannot marry him, but you are free to love him, if you take care that it is not talked of."

Henrietta so perfectly understood the sentiments of her aunt, that she did not

attempt

attempt to conceal from her the pleasure she took in the society of Rhodolphus. She laboured in secret to complete a plan she had formed. The great hindrance of her union with Rhodolphus was, that he had no title—Henrietta resolved he should have a title.

One day that she was alone with him, she turned the conversation upon the subject of their early years, and was so tender, so sentimental, that Rhodolphus was enraptured. Resting her face on her hand, sighs burst from her bosom, and she appeared with difficulty to restrain her tears. Rhodolphus, quite transported, seized her hand; "This hour," he said, "is the happiest of my life." Henrietta sighed, and covered her face. "May I be permitted again to possess the hope I formerly cherished—"

"What hope?" said Henrietta, affecting distraction of mind.

"The hope of calling you mine."

"Dear Buchling," she replied with a tranquil air, "why should I deny the

pleasure it gave me to meet you here, or that which I have so obviously taken in your society—and when you recall to my mind the sentiments of my childhood, I can no longer conceal, that to you I would willingly confide my fate."

Rhodolphus in an ecstacy threw himself at her feet.

"Get up again, my good friend!" she cried—"a man cannot pronounce the words *I love you*, without falling into that ridiculous attitude. Tell me, if you will, dear Buchling, that you love me, but grace the phrase with a smile, I beseech you—You do love me then?"

"Love you, Henrietta? aye, as man never loved before. Hear me——"

"I will hear nothing with that mournful face. You love me, and I love you. I know no man but you with whom I would willingly pass my life.—Be quiet, and listen to what I am about to confide to you. My aunt will not bestow me on any man who does not, to his personal advantages add another (ridiculous enough in

my eyes) that of title. We must employ all our efforts to obtain some honourable post for you. You have great interest, use it to the best advantage. The Countess of Languenan is your friend, get her protection. Until all this is accomplished, dear Rhodolphus, let us love one another, but with discretion. Once more tell me you love me, but not upon your knees.

Rhodolphus was embarrassed—" I love you !" he said.

" And I also love you," replied Henrietta.

A single kiss sealed the contract. Then Henrietta resumed her usual manners. She rallied, laughed, danced, sung and delighted in inflicting torment on the poor Rhodolphus.

" Enchantress !" he exclaimed, " how can you torture me thus ? The sensibility of my heart——"

Henrietta laid her hand on his mouth. " Hush !" she said, " not another syllable till you have a title.

CHAPTER XVII.

A SURPRISE.

RHODOLPHUS believed the resolution of Henrietta would be shaken, but whenever he appeared before her, and would have spoken of his love, her looks and gestures were so imposing, he had not power to utter a word.

Many amiable and distinguished young men, even some of the nobility, made pretensions to the hand of the beautiful and accomplished heiress; but were successively dismissed, with the concurrence of her aunt, whom Henrietta had the art completely to govern, by pretending to entire submission. Appearing never to have an opinion of her own, but implicitly to follow the law of her aunt, she adroitly suggested her own opinions, and held an absolute sway, alike in important as trivial matters.

Rhodolphus was transported with love and

and gratitude when he beheld the ill success of his rivals. Fain would he have expressed his sense of her favour, but she forbade him; and loudly disclaimed the generosity he attributed to her.

"Not at all, my dear friend," she said, "on this ground you owe me nothing. I dismissed these gentlemen to please myself alone: had any one of them been more worthy to be beloved than you, Rodolphus, I suppose I should have taken him."

Henrietta had now acquired such easy and attractive manners, that in rejecting the suits of her lovers, she contrived to maintain her empire over them. They remained near her, under the title of friends. Her vanity was gratified to the utmost by her facility of conquest; but she restrained its ebullitions by her prudence, and constantly obtained new triumphs, while affecting with modest grace to shun them. The most brilliant parties constantly resorted to the house of her aunt, and Henrietta Bellmann was the magnet that attracted them thither.

Amidst this flattering career, Henrietta never lost sight, for a moment, of the title for Rhodolphus. She contrived to engage the interest of the Countess Languenan in his favour, but her *chef d'ouvre* was to win the President of the council of finance, who had great influence in all the departments of state. The President was slightly acquainted with her aunt, and Henrietta speedily contrived to increase their intimacy. She paid unbounded court to the President's daughter, who often presented her to her father. On these occasions she displayed, to the utmost, her powers of pleasing, and soon had opportunity to observe that the President was always the first of the company to enter the saloon of her aunt, and the last to withdraw.

One morning Rhodolphus was commissioned by Henrietta to invite the President, in her name, to a party of pleasure. On quitting the closet of the President, he observed in the anti-chamber, a young man of striking figure, speaking to a domestic, who said—" The President will

see

see you to-morrow at ten o'clock; to-day, it is impossible. The young man, with an air of disappointment, followed the foot-steps of Buchling to the door of the house, where a carriage waited on the latter.— Buchling turned his eyes again on the stranger, and suddenly exclaimed "William! yes it is my friend."

They flew into each other's arms—William's countenance assumed the animated expression of a lively joy. He ascended the carriage with Rhodolphus, and they mutually repeated incessant questions, too eager for information to await from each other a reply.

When seated in the apartment of Rhodolphus, they became somewhat more calm. "It is a long time," said William, "since I heard of thee, my friend; where hast thou been, and what has befallen thee?"

Rhodolphus related, that an accident had compelled him to quit the university, from whence he had travelled as a musician, had visited many great cities, and established

established every where a good character. That chance had enabled him to perform a service of eminence to a Russian prince, who had testified his gratitude by assigning him a pension; that, at length, he had fixed his abode in this city, where he had found Henrietta Bellmann."

"Henrietta Bellmann!" exclaimed William: "What can have brought her hither?"

Rhodolphus explained that circumstance to him, and pourtrayed in glowing colours the increased perfections of Henrietta— "William," said he, warming with his subject, "I will hide nothing from you, your friendship demands my confidence. I love this adorable girl, and I am beloved by her. Her aunt exacts, that to obtain her hand, I must possess an office of distinction, or a title. The affair is in good hands, and I hope speedily to be the happiest man upon earth!"

"Could I nourish envy, it would be of thy fate, Rhodolphus."

"Yes, I knew the pleasure my good fortune

fortune would give my friend," said Rhodolphus, pressing his hand with a most engaging smile; "but, dear William, it is your turn to speak, tell me what has brought you here? Henrietta related the strangest story about your quitting the house of the Collector—explain it, dear William!"

"The Collector's grand-daughter, Antonia, loved young Biemann. The old *Syndic* agreed to the marriage, on condition that Antonia was the sole heir of the family—that gave birth to a scene—that —you know the Collector——he desired his grand-daughter's happiness, yet would not confirm it, by signing these conditions—then I packed up my clothes, put my money in my pocket, and abandoned myself to the protection of God. There were no other means of removing the difficulty."

Rhodolphus mused—"Yet, William, Antonia is not the wife of Biemann, and moreover the *Syndic* is the avowed enemy of the Collector."

"How!

"How! Antonia not married to Biemann?"

"No. It was discovered, it seems, she did not love young Biemann; and—— but it is a perplexed affair, which I by no means understand: even Henrietta does not make a connected tale of the history. Well, so you went—"

"I went first to D—— then to M—— then to B——; every where I offered my services, and was every where rejected. At length I came hither, and caused myself to be interrogated by a commissioner of the department of the public mines, to whom I had written a very urgent letter. He appeared satisfied with my knowledge, and advised me to address myself to the President, at whose house you met me. You see that I seek an office as well as you, or rather, I seek employment. I should confess to you I am inexperienced in the ways of men. The past year has convinced me I know nothing of the world."

"And how have you supported yourself?"

"You

"You will laugh, perhaps, when I say —chiefly by the labour of my hands. At H——— some persons had undertaken to construct a building in the water. I observed fault upon fault, for I understood the true principles of the art. One day I communicated my ideas to the inspector of the building. He prolonged the conversation, and invited me home to dinner. There I drew out my plan, for which he paid me. From that day I conducted the building with my own hands, and rendered him an account every evening of its progress. After this, I asked him to procure me an employment in that city, but he threw cold water on my design of settling there, assuring me I never could succeed at H——— without connections. I presently learned the true state of the case; he had given out my plans to be his own, and the credit of the building remained with him. I am now come to try my fortune here. I can afford to wait some time for patronage as I have money."

Rhodolphus desired to know how much,

much, and smiled compassionately at the smallness of the sum. "No," said he, "my dear friend, you do not know the world. I am more experienced in it, and must guide you." He then described the favourable position of his own affairs, and with considerable goodness of heart, yet not quite unmixed with vanity, took upon himself to patronize the views of the unconnected William.

On the same day he mentioned to Henrietta his rencontre with William in the anti-chamber of the President. She had been exceedingly piqued that William, even at the moment she had designed him her hand, had so abruptly sacrificed her to the prospects of Antonia; she now listened with the utmost appearance of indifference to the details of Rhodolphus concerning him, and contented herself with saying "Indeed!"

"I believed," said Rhodolphus, "that you would be glad to learn that I have met with the dearest friend of my youth,

and

and the rather, because I hope he will owe his success to you."

"I have my apprehensions that your friend will attempt to play his old part with you. Certainly, he can be of no service to you; your situation is, at present, greatly superior to his, yet he will endeavour to maintain his ascendency over you, as he has always done."

"Maintain his ascendency!" said Rhodolphus, a little resentfully.

"Yes; he has the passion for domination of the person with whom he was brought up, and I foresee you will pass many disagreeable hours. Yet we must give him our assistance. To-morrow I will present him to my aunt; we will see what she can do for him. Yet, already, I perceive how much our services will be thwarted by his pride."

"Dear Henrietta! his pride is frequently so noble, so generous——"

"Pride can never be a virtue. It ought not to be confounded with constancy and firmness. However, bring him here; it

is

is fortunate for him that you are on such good terms with the President. He must have been excessively humiliated when he found himself compelled to wait in the anti-chamber."

"Humiliated! He appeared with as haughty an air in the anti-chamber, as if he had been admitted into the inner room."

"Bring him here to-morrow. I do not wish that he should owe his success to himself."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONSTANCY.

WHEN William had returned to his lodgings, he said to himself, "Rhodolphus here, and Henrietta! And she thy mistress! Antonia not yet married; and Biemann the enemy of the good Collector! How strangely does fortune sport with me! Had I not so hastily quitted the Collector, perhaps, Henrietta had been my wife,

wife, and I the happiest of men; and now must I be witness to the inexpressible happiness of another—of another! Do I speak thus of Rhodolphus? of my friend?"

He reflected still further on his situation, "Am I not," he said, "protected by the genius of justice and of friendship? what have I to do but to be silent, and to smile at my fate? The Collector is right; misery is often nothing more than the apprehension of misfortune, nothing more than timidity, and weakness of mind. Do we not support bodily pain with constancy, and why should the mind be more feeble than the body? is a courageous resolution so difficult--?" In the midst of these, and similar thoughts, William fell asleep.

The next morning William was again occupied with the same subject, when he received a note from Rhodolphus, saying, that he could not then attend him to the President's, but that in the evening he would present him to Henrietta, who had herself eagerly pressed the visit.

William

William ruminated. "Her beauty," said he, "shall be no more to me, than the head of one of Raphael's Madona's, for she is the mistress of my friend." Pleased with this resolution, he sat down to his table to finish a drawing.

Immediately after dinner Rhodolphus entered. He examined the drawings, and selecting the best sent them to Henrietta, to further her designs for William's advancement; he then explained to his friend what sort of men he would see that evening, and gave him some intimation respecting the conduct he ought to observe. William smiled, for he knew that in company he was not timid, but reserved.

The hour arrived which Henrietta had fixed for the reception of William, and he departed with a mind extremely agitated, yet assumed a tranquil look.

Henrietta, for William's punishment, wished to make him sensibly feel the happiness he had rejected. She had dressed herself, therefore, with the most studious care; a domestic conducted William through

through magnificent apartments into the parlour. Henrietta rose, advanced to meet her fugitive, and received him with a most enchanting smile.

William stood before her entirely lost in admiration: he had expected to find her drest as formerly with simplicity, and now he saw her habited like a princess. She practised every artifice to retain him in this species of delirium; she made him sit down beside her, placed her hand upon his arm, and spoke of the Collector, and his relations; she recalled to his remembrance their former years; jested with him about the dancing master, and in the extravagance of her gaiety practised some steps of a dance: gratified that William should see her in those positions, that displayed her fine person to advantage.

She passed with inimitable grace to graver subjects. In the most winning manner, she made enquiries into William's situation; and requested to know his wishes and his plans: in her fine eyes was painted so strong an interest in his concerns,

cerns, she artfully unfolded to him such flattering hopes, that all his senses seemed dissolved in rapture, and he trembled when she took his hand to present him to her aunt.

"Dear aunt," she said with the greatest sweetness possible, "I bring you here another friend of my youth, M. Krause, a true knight, without fear or reproach. The drawings you see here are executed by him."

William saw clearly from the discourse of this lady, that Henrietta had neglected nothing to procure him her good will; and in less than half an hour he was as much at his ease as if he had been at home. He then watched Henrietta's words, looks, and conversation, with incessant attention, and thought he could perceive nothing that could sanction the hopes of Rhodolphus.

As the company arrived, Henrietta presented William, as her countryman; she particularly drew him into conversation with the President, and introduced

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an occasion to speak of William's drawings: the President, who was really a judge of the art, expressed a desire to see them, approved highly of their style, and said—"M. Krause, you must remain with us; come and see me to-morrow, and bring me some more of your drawings."

William, on his return home, passed in review the scenes of the evening, and could scarcely persuade himself they were not a dream; he could form no distinct opinion of Henrietta's character, nor could he with truth say what were his own sentiments: Henrietta, the mistress of Rhodolphus, yet so kind, so attentive to him!

By degrees, when he had seen Henrietta often, he became more tranquil; he voluntarily yielded up every hope, resolving to confine his conduct within the bounds of a tender friendship for Henrietta: in proportion as he felt his own loss with vehemence, the more frequently he repeated to himself, while he looked on

Henrietta—She is the destined wife of my friend!

Henrietta, indeed, had designed to dazzle William's eyes with the splendor of her situation; but she had gained a triumph over him beyond what she had expected; he considered her as a model of human perfection; her manner, her look, her actions, all confirmed him in this opinion.

Henrietta soon perceived, that William was not indifferent to her. She loved Rhodolphus, and had loved him from her infancy, but she had no high idea of his merit, and she often treated him with a mixture of disdain, which she felt to be impossible in her conduct towards William. Rhodolphus she thought an amiable man, but William a superior being, to whose esteem and approbation she ardently aspired; every day Wiliam gained more and more on her good opinion; even his manners in company appeared to her worthy of admiration; she had supposed him incapable of supporting his station in the great world, and she was much

much surprised to see, that though he did not carry himself with the ductility of Rhodolphus, there was a certain air of ease and dignity in his manner; what she was able to acquire with painful study, and Rhodolphus by long attention and habit, appeared perfectly easy to William, "because," she said to herself, "what the Collector has so often declared is true, William is no ordinary man."

In a short time, Henrietta treated William with the same deference as during their childhood, when they learned to dance together: she knew with what an ardent passion he had loved her, and the eager manner with which she sometimes caught him gazing upon her, and his trembling nerves, when by accident his hand encountered hers, left her no doubt that he still loved her.

Rhodolphus informed her, that he had confided the secret of their passion to William. Henrietta frowned at this intelligence.

"He is my friend," said Rhodolphus.

"Very well," she replied, "do what you please with your own secrets, but spare mine."

Henrietta saw clearly that William had resolved to conceal his passion in silence; but would he maintain that resolution? She thought that improbable; he had, indeed, buried his first passion within his own breast, but the timidity natural to a first love might be the cause: besides, he had seldom been alone with her; she did not desire that he should declare his passion, yet she daily expected he would do so.

William maintained the same conduct towards Henrietta with inflexible steadiness; not a word betrayed his sentiments, not even when Henrietta threw in his way the fairest occasions. One evening when they were alone, and he was reading the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, from time to time he cast his fine eyes upon her filled with tears; his voice faltered—Henrietta trembled with expectation, but he continued to read, and lavished all the

expressions

expressions of his real passion on the picture before them. Henrietta then introduced a conversation more dangerous than the play; William called all his powers to his aid, and his conduct subsided into all the calm of apparent friendship. "This man is, indeed, an extraordinary being," she said to herself; "I would give a great deal to know if he will always thus command his passions."

CHAPTER XIX.

JEALOUSY.

HENRIETTA did not entertain any premeditated design to draw William into a confession of his love for her; nevertheless she indulged in the hope, it might be said, against her will: a love concealed from motives of honour, is a triumph not to be disregarded by female vanity; sooner or later it bursts forth like a smothered flame. Henrietta expected this event with a growing impatience, yet in vain:

vain: she was in truth offended that her beauty could not shake William's resolution. "I will at least know," she said to herself, "if he loves me;" and this excuse she thought a sufficient apology for the impropriety of her manner towards William.

Henrietta had also another incitement for her present conduct; she was flattered, and pleased with a jealousy in Rhodolphus, which began to betray itself from time to time; at first, he only laughed, when she said to him, "I mean to form your friend a little for the commerce of the great world;" but at length he thought she carried her system of education too far, and the number of remarks which he was continually compelled to make were so much food given to his jealousy.

"Rhodolphus," she said to him one day, "I am sorry to perceive that you are jealous. Do you then doubt my good faith?"

"I, Henrietta!"

"Yes, Rhodolphus, and I shall be still more

more mortified if you deny it; you are very jealous."

"And if I am—I love you in an unutterable manner; I envy the air that kisses your cheeks!"

"Nay, but speak plainly, what are your fears, Rhodolphus?"

"Can I see you take such interest in William and—?"

"And is he not worthy of the interest that I take in his concerns?"

"Doubtless; but pardon me, Henrietta, if I think you take a warmer interest in William than in me; when I observe the unremitting attention—"

"I encourage his attentions, because an intimacy with so excellent a being affords me real pleasure; but must you conclude from thence that I am enamoured of him?"

"Who can tell to what this excessive admiration of William may lead?"

"At least, I ought to be very grateful, Rhodolphus, for your good opinion!—Well, I ought to torment you a little; but

there is something very amiable in your fears—I am afraid I shall forgive you, Rhodolphus—Then you wish me to break with William, or at least to receive him with coldness and disdain?"

"Assuredly not, dear Henrietta! It would be a source of grief to me if you were not the friend of my friend. But there are a thousand distinctions between—"

"Not one—absolutely none where jealousy is to be the judge—However, let me see you in the evening, I will satisfy you if it be possible."

Rhodolphus was punctual to his hour, and found William alone with Henrietta. They were seated on the same sopha, close to each other, and conversing in a very animated manner on the limits of friendship.

"Yes, friendship ought to have its limits," said Rhodolphus with significance.

"What are they?" said William, "I know

know of none but those that are fixed in the heart by virtue."

Henrietta listened in silence to an argument which ensued between William and Rhodolphus. " But how," said she at length, " how if your friend distrusts you ?"

" Distrusts !" said William, " that is as if you were to say your friend who is not your friend—Rhodolphus, could any thing on earth make you feel a distrust of me ?"

" I may distrust the weakness of human nature, William."

" I understand you, Rhodolphus," said William with anger.

" Not quite," said Henrietta. " He means to say that there are sentiments that have more force than friendship ; for example, love. Will a friend sacrifice love to friendship, William ? and if he would, has he the power ?

" Yes," said William, " he has the power."

Rhodolphus seized his hand, and pressed it to his heart. "It is not you, William, that I distrust; I cannot distrust you."

"It is then me!" said Henrietta; "but, Rhodolphus, your friend should be my friend, the most tender and best beloved of my friends, because I love you, dear Rhodolphus!"

He folded her in his arms, exclaiming, "Oh! my Henrietta! adored Henrietta!" William viewed them with an oppression of heart; he seemed in that moment to part with Henrietta for ever.

"Yes," said Rhodolphus, "my friend ought to be yours as much as he is mine." The hand of Henrietta's he held in his he now placed on William's shoulder.

"Be my friend!" she said, in a tone as cold as Rhodolphus could desire, and bending forward she lightly pressed her lips to his.

Henrietta perceived the trembling agitation which seized on William, she perceived it was time to end the scene, and turning to Rhodolphus, said pleasantly, "Go,

"Go, go, my friend, and order some refreshments to be brought in, that we seal this compact like good Germans."

Rhodolphus went out for this purpose.

"Dear William," Henrietta said, "may our friendship be no less fervent than love!" She blushed the moment she had pronounced these inconsiderate words.

William answered, though with a more tranquil air, "Yes, Henrietta! Yes, thou beloved of my friend!"

Henrietta had designedly led the way to this scene; she wished to appease her lover, and subscribe bounds to William's conduct. At first she was entirely successful in her plan: Rhodolphus was satisfied in her having made his friend the witness of her love for him; his jealousy was therefore appeased, and he resolved to give Henrietta a proof of his confidence.

He and William had been invited by her to pass the day in a garden belonging to her aunt, in the neighbourhood of the town. This retreat, in which the arbours were embossed with flowers, and

the thickets filled with nightingales, might be truly said to be the temple of Love. Rhodolphus, as if hehad been disappointed, sent his excuses, knowing that thus his friend and his mistress would pass the greater part of the day together alone.

This little contrivance was not lost upon Henrietta. She was pleased with the confidence Rhodolphus reposed in her. She left William to wander alone; and retiring to her harpsichord, played several sonatas, which Rhodolphus had composed for her, and scarcely spoke to William, except when she asked his opinion of a pavilion which her aunt was desirous of raising in the midst of a wood, for which he furnished her with several plans.

William's manner to Henrietta was perfectly reserved, although he felt her kiss still burning on his lips. In the evening he went to Rhodolphus, related how the day had passed, and Rhodolphus felt the proudest sensations of joy when he heard of the conduct of his mistress. This confidence, however, did not continue. Rhodolphus

dolphus afterwards several times surprised Henrietta seated beside William, listening to the songs of the nightingales. At such times, her sorrowful air and her blushing cheeks betrayed the secret emotion of her soul. He believed that Henrietta, notwithstanding her declaration, loved his friend. While Henrietta thought that William's feelings had been narrowed within too small bounds by her declaration, and a secret temptation arose in her mind to try her power to extort the secret from his bosom.

From the moment that in his presence Henrietta had avowed her love for his friend, the hopes of William, or rather secret illusion with which he daily fed his flame, was destroyed: hope had not been his. He now only beheld in Henrietta's conduct the testimonies of a pure and sincere friendship, from whence he derived his all of happiness. The jealousy of Rhodolphus never came within his thoughts; he knew his own heart, and he believed his friend equally satisfied of its honour. His sin-

cerity

cerity towards Rhodolphus was unbounded: he related to him the minutest circumstances that belonged to his intercourse with Henrietta, and unconsciously infused into the bosom of his friend, a subtle poison, while he spoke of the hours he had passed with Henrietta when other visitors were denied admittance:—for Henrietta had not scrupled to affirm, that now she never saw William but for a passing moment, and that in the presence of her aunt or some other person.

Henrietta understood her critical situation, and always on the watch to obliterate the suspicions of her lover, she read his anxiety in his constrained manners. She imagined Rhodolphus might now be subdued by a threat, and she lost no time in addressing him thus: "You, my friend, begin to play the part of the jealous tyrant very soon; but it does not suit me now, or ever, to stoop to that of the humble slave."

"Good God!" cried Rhodolphus, "what can I do?"

At this exclamation she smiled, and said to him, with the most winning air, "Believe me, Rhodolphus, I do love you. Why will you shut your eyes to the palpable conviction that I am only amused with the singularity of William's character? Can you imagine that if I loved him I should want the courage to avow it?"

"But you hide from me many circumstances that I afterwards learn from William."

"Oh! certainly, that is a matter of course. You oblige me to deceive you a little, when you follow me so incessantly with that lowering brow. My friend, your want of confidence compels me either to break with you or torment you:—I have not a heart for the former, and I choose the latter. And you really persuade yourself I was not aware that William would speak of all these visits which I had denied? Suppose I were to tell you I had engaged William in a plot——"

"A plot!"

"Yes; in order to bring you back to common

common sense. I have known William maintain a trifling lie to serve me."

"William! A lie?"

"Assuredly. One cannot act upon fair and rational principles with a jealous man; it would be as prudent to give a sword to a madman."

In despite of this artful explanation, Rhodolphus could not yet allay the pangs of his jealousy, and he resolved on the very first opportunity to open his heart to William.

CHAPTER XX.

PERJURY.

"WILLIAM," said Rhodolphus, "be candid with me. Your assiduities to Henrietta of late appear to assume a character——"

At these words William changed colour, and his agitation became so marked, that Rhodolphus was for some moments unable

to

to proceed. At length he started up, and clasping his hands in an agony, exclaimed, "I conjure you by the love of mercy! answer me truly!—Do you love Henrietta?"

"I do—I love her with an inexpressible, unextinguishable passion."

Rhodolphus sunk again into his seat.—"Oh! this indeed I had never believed! Deceived, betrayed by those in whom alone I had put my trust! Is it you, William, that can seek to destroy the happiness of Rhodolphus?"

"Unfortunate man! what do thy words imply? have I not sworn to thee an eternal friendship!" and he bared his arm to display the *R* engraven thereon.

"Are you innocent? Speak!—Answer me, dear William."

"I cannot. If you accuse me of a crime and expect me to defend myself, our friendship is at an end."

Rhodolphus shuddered. "But," said he, "have you not already declared to me you love her? Am I to smile and uncover

cover my bosom to you while you plunge the poinard in my heart?"

"Rhodolphus, be thyself! Never yet has William deceived a human being, and thou art his friend."

"But she is my mistress. Speak, I beseech you. Explain every thing; promise every thing."

"No. It is enough that I have assured you I never deceived a stranger, and I cannot deceive you."

"Then our friendship shall end."

"It is at an end," said William, with an accent of grief.

A silence ensued of some minutes duration.

"Rhodolphus," said William, "since my infancy I have loved Henrietta with a fervent affection, but this day has that confession passed my lips for the first time."

"And Henrietta does not know that you love her?"

"I believe that it is not unknown to her."

"She

"She knows it—then my suspicions are just. Canst thou yet say I ought to confide in thy friendship?"

"You ought. Henrietta, I believe, does know I love her, but that is not my reproach. I have never spoken to her of my love."

"Despicable evasion!" cried Rhodolphus, "you entangle yourself in your own snares."

William rose with impetuosity, "The die is cast!" he exclaimed. "We meet no more!"

"See Henrietta no more, Sir. If you again visit her, I shall not fail to call you to a bitter account." With this menace Rhodolphus quitted the room.

"And here," said William to himself, "ends all! My parents! Henrietta! and even the friend of my youth; all are lost to me!"

Never again to behold Henrietta; to sacrifice that, his only pleasure, to the weakness of Rhodolphus, was his first determination; but ere the day had passed away,

away, pity for the sufferings of his friend took entire possession of his mind: "He wronged me," he said, "in the delirium of a burning fever; but he will be himself again, and repent of his injustice. It shall not be my part to add to the severity of his remorse. I will do nothing that can augment the shame with which he will soon be overwhelmed. For the sake of his future peace, I will make my accustomed visits to Henrietta."

On the way thither he again hesitated, and when arrived almost before her door, he asked himself, "Can I still rely on my strength? Rhodolphus must not have a look, a word, wherewith to reproach me. No; there exists not on earth the power that could make me betray my passion."

At that instant he was met by Rhodolphus, who fiercely demanded where he was going?

"To visit Henrietta," William coldly replied.

"Forbear! You love her! She is mine! I conjure you go not thither."

"It

"It is my duty, and you will one day confess it."

Rhodolphus hastily drew his hat over his eyes, and passed on. William remained irresolute; a secret emotion appeared to restrain his footsteps. At length he exclaimed, "Rhodolphus must rely implicitly on me!"—And he crossed the portico.

As he was informed that a large company were assembled in the saloon, he turned his steps toward the garden. There resting on a flowery bank, under the shade of *acacia* in full bloom, he indulged in delightful dreams of other worlds, where friendship would be pure from reproach, and where love would ever be sacred from the pangs of disappointment. "Ah!" said he, "must this world then exist only in my imagination? Why should I cease to love Henrietta? Why should not her heart answer to mine with a pure and holy fervor? It is not her beauty that fires my thoughts; I pant not for her embraces; I languish not to taste her kisses;

kisses; in her lovely form I trace the image of perfection; in Henrietta I adore virtue!—I love, but never will Henrietta hear me pronounce that word.—Unhallowed wishes cannot find entrance into my heart; desire cannot kindle its fires in my bosom. A pure and happy life awaits me! Henrietta shall be the wife of my friend; I will enjoy their felicity; I will be the inmate of their dwelling; I will be her friend, her brother; the preceptor, the benefactor, the guardian of her children. We will taste the purest of domestic bliss, we will possess an undivided affection! one soul shall inform the family!"

Transported with this illusion, tears ran down his cheeks, his heart palpitated—he stretched out his arms, exclaiming, "Oh happy blissful dream, why cannot it be realized?"

"It shall be realized!" cried Henrietta, falling into his arms.

No phantom of imagination deceived his senses. It was Henrietta, the beauteous, the adored Henrietta, answering his tears with

with tears, sinking upon his bosom, and repeating, "*It shall be realized!*"

Sensations new and uncontrollable annihilated the entire universe in William's remembrance. He held the seducing vision to his heart; he imprinted burning kisses on her lips.

"Strange, incomprehensible being!" exclaimed Henrietta, vainly struggling to free herself from his ardent grasp—"For heaven's sake what brought you into this garden?" This question restored him to himself.

He rose with a look of the deepest consternation. Henrietta took his arm to conduct him toward the house. "I have need," he said, "of a few moments reflection. I beseech you leave me."

Again he threw himself on the ground. The kisses of Henrietta burned upon his lips, and a devouring flame appeared to consume his heart. Shame and anguish seized upon him, for the sacred vow of friendship was now broken.

When the company which Henrietta entertained

tertained at the time of William's arrival had departed, she concluded (for his coming had not been announced) he would not visit her that evening, and went alone to walk in the garden. As she approached the bank where William was reclined on the grass, she heard a profound sigh, and presently beheld William absorbed in a reverie. She was about to interrupt his meditations with a loud laugh, but as his hands covered his eyes, she perceived tears to trickle through his fingers. She listened in breathless silence to his exclamations. She was touched with compassion, with a tender admiration. She felt that he was the most exalted of human beings, and when his arms opened as it were to receive her, she could not forbear rushing into them. In a moment she felt she had gone too far—she endeavoured to quit his embrace; saying, as in a jest, "My friend, you are still dreaming."

William remained on the ground till a domestic came to summon him to a collation Henrietta had caused to be served in another

another part of the garden, in a grove of chesnut trees.

He followed the servant mechanically, and seated himself at table with an air of such deep abstraction, as gave rise to much raillery on the part of Henrietta. He did not eat, but received the glass whenever it was presented to him, and this was done so frequently, that he had presently drank more than twice his usual quantity of wine.

When the table was cleared, Henrietta said to him, "You have not yet told me, you eternal dreamer, on what subjects your meditations were fixed when I discovered you under the acacia."

William hesitated: he could not bring himself to speak on the subject. Henrietta would not be denied, and at length he confessed he meditated on her future happiness with Rhodolphus. With reiterated questions she drew him on to a further explanation. At first his recital was couched in terms of the most distant respect, but at length his colours became more lively,

his utterance more rapid, and he finished with carrying the hand Henrietta had laid upon his arm to his lips.

The wine William had swallowed excited his spirits to a species of delirium; never had Henrietta beheld him so lively, so easy, so seducing; she told him her opinion, and encircling her waist with his arm, he uttered some incoherent sentences, then, throwing himself at her feet, he passionately avowed his love.

Henrietta's triumph was complete. She secretly exulted in the success of the arts that had led him to this point. She assumed, however, a careless air, and smilingly replied, "Your dream is fine, but a little too poetical. And you affect the lover too, admirably well! As for me, poor girl, you have so bewildered me, that I cannot but suppose I am dreaming when I behold you at my feet."

"Oh!" said William, again lifting her hand to his lips, "I can no longer command myself; this once I must declare to you what I have endured so many years! —But

—But once! I shall die if you repulse me."

"Dear William," said Henrietta, with the most encouraging tenderness of manner, "I promise you an affectionate and constant friendship." She placed her hand on his palpitating heart—"And when this heart shall be more tranquil——"

William ardently pressed her to his bosom. "Ah! you are dreaming again," said Henrietta, half resisting and half yielding to his kisses. William's transports became ungovernable.

"You offend me!" she exclaimed, with a tone so serious, that William instantly released her from his embrace.

"Our interview," said Henrietta, "passes the bounds of prudence. We had better put an end to it now, and speak of those things when you are more calm. Dear William, at present your heart is too full."

"Can it be otherwise?" said William, "your image fills every pore. You must, you shall know the extent of my love! I would

would endure the rack, plunge into the midst of flames, precipitate myself into the yawning gulph, to obtain one of your smiles! I have no existence but in you! you comprise my all of life, of love, of hope, of joy!"

The prudence of Henrietta became every instant more and more weak, and the influence of William's fervor more and more powerful. He renewed his embraces and his kisses. At length she suddenly tore herself from his arms, exclaiming with a deep sigh, "I am the destined wife of thy friend!"

Struck as with a thunderbolt, William remained immoveable, the very image of despair. Henrietta spoke to him, but he heard her not. "Wretch that I am," he exclaimed in a voice of agony, "whither shall I fly, where conceal my shame? I am lost for ever!"

"William, dear William!" said Henrietta, "why this terror? why this despair? You have been in the wrong certainly, but I forgive you, and promise you

eternal

eternal silence. Rhodolphus shall never know your error."

William shuddered. Again he fixed his eyes on the ground. "Pardon me," he said, "I am—I was mad—intoxicated. Oh! wretched, wretched man! Art thou undone for ever!——Adieu—be happy!"

He rushed past her as she extended her hand to stay him, and precipitately left the garden.

His motions now were of a nature Henrietta did not understand. "Strange being," she said, "I wish he had not come hither this evening—There is no guiding a man who is at one moment ruled by the impulses of his sensations, and the next moment puts his feelings under the government of I know not what strange opinions. What crime can there be in his having said, *I love you!* How many men have told me the same thing! 'tis true not quite in the manner of this madman. Really I begin to fear he is somewhat dangerous to me; I think too often of him—I am resolved to forget him."

She returned to the house agitated, and still occupied about William. She went to bed, and in her sleep imagined that William continued to dream without being awakened.

CHAPTER XXI.

REPENTANCE.

WILLIAM passed the entire night in the fields. Returning next morning to his lodgings, he found a billet from Rhodolphus demanding an immediate interview in an unfrequented wood, a small distance from the city. William departed, and Rhodolphus overtaking him within a few paces of his habitation, took him by the arm, and in silence they proceeded to the most retired part of the wood.

"Last night," said Rhodolphus, "I witnessed your embrace of Henrietta! You have most basely deceived me! There is but one thing I now desire to receive

ceive from your hands—Death." He offered a pistol to William—"Nay, do not tremble; you have already taken more than my life—you have despoiled me of my love!—you have taken from me my confidence in friendship. Take the pistol, and with it this billet: that writing will preserve you, if I fall, in safety from all suspicion, it declares that I end my life with my own hands."

He retired about four steps, and placing himself face to face with William, said "Fire! Fire, despicable villain! or I will fire myself!"

William instantly uncovered his bosom, and Rhodolphus prepared to take aim.—William remained firm in his position, and, while tears coursed each other down his cheek, he exclaimed, "May Rhodolphus live for happiness!"

"Wretch that thou art, wouldst thou again deceive me with thy false professions?"

"I have deceived thee, even beyond what thou canst suspect! I have declar-

ed my love ; I have held her to my heart ; I have kissed her lips. Vainly did she repulse me : I desisted not till she tore herself from my arms, and overwhelmed me with maledictions !——Yes, it is I alone that have betrayed thee !—I have irreparably outraged thy destined wife !—Hear me a moment longer : I love her yet—I shall ever love her—My death alone gives her to you in peace."

Rhodolphus remained some minutes lost in thought, then suddenly starting, he raised the pistol to his forehead. William sprung forward, and wrenched the fatal instrument from his grasp. They rush into each other's arms—" William ! William ! how couldst thou thus deceive me ?"

" It was myself that I deceived."

" You have loved Henrietta since your infancy, you said—Did you not yesterday also tell me she was informed of your passion ?"

William related the treaty that formerly had been set on foot for their union ; and he

he added that Antonia had probably shewn to Henrietta a paper expressive of his feelings, of which he knew she had possession." Rhodolphus interrupted him—

"The fatal rest I know. You came to this city, saw Henrietta, avowed your love, and was made happy by the return of her's."

"No, Rhodolphus! I am not that practised villain. I love her still; but she was thine, and I knew how to be silent. Never till yesterday———"

"Yesterday! Oh William! how was that possible to thee! In the fury of jealousy I insulted thee; but thy vengeance was terrible!—I rejected thy friendship, and at Henrietta's feet thou declaredst thy love!"

"Nor am I that monster either! When you quitted me yesterday, I swore—yes, in uprightness of intention, I swore to be silent until death!—Alas! I learned too late that I ought not to have sworn, that I ought to have flown from the presence of the idol of my soul—I presented myself at

her door in the confidence of good resolutions——A particular accident—I had drank a quantity of wine. The rapid circulation of my blood tore from me my secret and my honour."

"With such a constant intercourse, sooner or later that must have happened. And then, no doubt, she confessed her love for you."

"Rhodolphus, you wrong Henrietta. At first she rallied me, then pitied, and reasoned with me—When my mad folly allowed me to hear no more, she tore herself from my arms, exclaiming, "I am the destined wife of your friend!"

"William, do not impose on me. Did Henrietta pronounce those words?"

William confirmed his assertion, and a ray of joy penetrated the heart of Rhodolphus: yet neither were his fears nor his sorrow entirely dispelled. He wished that William would promise never more to see Henrietta, but he had not the courage to ask it. This idea presented itself to William, who, of his own accord, made the

the proposition to Rhodolphus. The latter received this overture with delight, and proposed that William should write to that effect to Henrietta. William wrote a short note; but Rhodolphus was not satisfied with it, and dictated one in a different style.

"Is it possible you can request me to send this?" said William. "To judge by this note, it might be supposed she had made me an offer of her love, and I refused it."

"I entreat of you, William; this is necessary to my happiness."

William wrote in substance what his friend requested, only softening some of the expressions.

Rhodolphus knew very well what he did in making this request to William. Henrietta was not so innocent in his eyes as William had represented her, or rather he suspected that the whole scene had been purposely contrived by her. It was possible she loved William: it was plain her vanity had been strongly excited by him,

and vanity in a woman often leads further than is intended. To detach Henrietta entirely from William, he thought it necessary to wound her vanity, and that he expected would be the effect of William's note.

About half an hour after the note was dispatched, Rhodolphus left William to visit Henrietta. William now recollected that she had hinted to him that Rhodolphus ought not to be made acquainted with what had passed; and, for the first time, he saw her conduct in a light that was not altogether favourable. Many circumstances combined to persuade him that he was not indifferent to Henrietta. The more this pressed upon his thoughts, the more the agitation of his mind increased, and the less capable was he of forming his judgment, or coming to a resolution.

As soon as Henrietta had received William's note, she sent the gardener's boy to know if Rhodolphus had been there. The boy speedily returned to the room, saying, that M. Buchling had enquired for her.

Rhodolphus

Rhodolphus found Henrietta at her embroidery. She did not doubt that the friends had had an explanation; for the gardener's daughter informed her, that M. Buchling had been writing, secretly, in the garden the preceding evening, and had appeared to be exceedingly out of humour.

Rhodolphus turned the conversation on William: while she pursued her work more eagerly, only affecting a smile. At length she said, "Your friend is a most extraordinary creature. He came to see me yesterday exceedingly absent and sorrowful in his manner; I invited him to sup, and I think in his absence of mind he drank too much wine. When we quitted the table, we took a turn in the garden, and would you imagine it, Rhodolphus, he made an open declaration of love to me? and in a manner so vehement and outrageous, that I was disconcerted, and scarcely preserved my own presence of mind. His declaration was singular enough, but a note which I received from him this morning,

morning, recals his declaration; and is in truth still more singular than his conduct. He has bid me an eternal adieu."

As she spoke these words she raised her eyes from her work, and looked at Rhodolphus, endeavouring to conceal her embarrassment with a smile.

"I was not unwilling," she said, affecting indifference, "to know how such a man would pronounce these words, *I love*; and in truth he uttered them like any other, in a very foolish manner."

Henrietta here finished this curious discourse, and gave her lover William's note, which he had requested to see. He pointed out to her the harshness of some of the expressions. She replied, "Your friend is not a man with whom one can quarrel about words. It would be a different thing if you had written to me thus. This manner of taking leave is handsome enough for such a man; and if he were now to enter the room, I would receive him as if he had not written a word of that note."

"Your

"Your feelings are very generous towards my friend?"

"I acknowledge it. When a man has the courage to sacrifice what is dearest to him in the world, I feel that I ought also to make some sacrifice."

Thus Henrietta sported with the anguish of Rhodolphus. She was offended at his attempt to make a dupe of her, for in the conversation he had betrayed the fact, that he had learned every thing from William. She easily suspected that some of the harsh expressions in the note were dictated by Rhodolphus; and her suspicions were converted to certainty, when he enforced the rudeness of the expressions. Instead, therefore, of declaiming against William, she thought proper to praise him a little extravagantly, the more to mortify Rhodolphus.

She was in secret offended with William's note, but not so as to resolve to break with him; for since he had owned his passion, he was become much more indifferent to her. She did not doubt but

that she should soon see him again, "for," she said to herself, "men are mere children in these affairs. They will repulse the hand that a moment before they had kissed with transport, and imagine themselves to be free, because they do not perceive their chains: all this time they grow more and more enslaved."

William, however, was an exception to this rule. He did not return; on the contrary, with the utmost care he shunned the occasion of seeing Henrietta. She frequented public places and companies, where she hoped to meet with him: he was no where to be found. At length she almost entirely forgot him, but she was excessively vexed to see Rhodolphus gain this open triumph.

Rhodolphus was meantime convinced that Henrietta never loved William, or that her regard for him was merely transitory. He resolved, however, to keep them separate, for he still feared the vehement temper of William. He appeared to have obtained his object. Henrietta

spoke

spoke of William sometimes with bitterness, sometimes with irony, and often with disdain; yet she had not abandoned her design, which she resolved to execute at any price, less to triumph over William than to humble Rhodolphus. "I would shew him," she said, "that every thing is possible to a woman."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MASQUERADE.

HENRIETTA had a dislike to masquerades, because she had received an affront at the first she had attended. A masquerade was now on the eve of taking place in a few days, and she informed Rhodolphus that she was going to pay a visit for a little time at some distance from the city.

William considered masquerades as one of the finest amusements that ever was imagined, for persons of wit and humour,

to sustain them. "Most people," he would say, "are content with a domino and a mask, which express nothing, conceal nothing, so that the liveliest of amusements becomes tedious. I wish I could form a masquerade in which all the extremes of rank were confounded; where should be found the beggar and the emperor, the negro and the admiral. It would be indeed a delightful dream, an imaginary world; a scene like those of Orlando Furioso, in which Apollo is found in the midst of saints, and Cupid makes love to a vestal in the habit of a priestess."

His idea was adopted; a number of families agreed to form a masquerade, in which each person should sustain a character.

Henrietta made the visit she had talked of, but she returned secretly to town, to go to the masquerade.

She had found means to trace William's design to appear in the character of a fortune teller; she resolved herself to assume that of a sorceress.

The masquerade commenced, but the

greater

greater part of the masques did not find the pleasure they expected, because they either wanted courage or humour to sustain their parts. The fortune-teller acted his part well, but still better the sorceress, whom no one knew, although she appeared to be acquainted with the secrets of every family.

After some time the fortune-teller and the sorceress met, and consequently engaged in a strife of wit which for a long time was the only amusement of the company; when they ceased to be so much observed, she drew him aside and said:

"Is it long since you undertook to tell fortunes?"

"Since my infancy."

"And you do not know, that in this place of pleasure, you are perhaps the only one that is wretched; you do not feel that this dress," laying her hand on his breast, "covers a heart a prey to despair; without parents, without friends—for I have deprived you of the only one you ever possessed

possessed—without mistress, for her you cast from you yourself—you are alone in the world! Thy infancy passed like an imaginary dream—thy youth in secret and vain desires; beloved by all, thou hast fled from all! Thou hast wounded all hearts, because thine own was bruised! have I not told thee the truth? hast thou not thrown thyself away for ever, because thou wouldst be more than it is permitted man to be?"

These words, pronounced with a species of fury, sunk deeply into William's heart. He was disconcerted and silent for some moments, at length he turned to the sorceress and said, "Mask, who art thou?"

"Then you cannot divine, although you are a fortune-teller; whom can you suppose me to be? some person of your acquaintance undoubtedly, since you see that none of your secrets are hid from me. But I tell thee, thou dost not know who I am; yet I know thee; when wast thou ever really happy?—Merely for the few rapid hours whilst thou wast deceived by

the

the virtuous illusions of childhood; since thou hast ever fled from happiness, though happiness would never have fled from thee, bitterness has succeeded in thy heart! a good man has need of love and friendship to remain good. Thou art alone! Why wouldst thou stand in the world alone?"

"Because I must," said William involuntarily.

"You must! but why must you, alone, abandon hope, of which heaven bereaves no man? Is thy fate alone irrevocable? Do not the stars of heaven change? Are not men subject to death? Are not their passions changeable?—To embrace every species of hope is presumption; to abandon all hope is cowardice!—it is to doubt of life, to disbelieve in virtue and Providence."

"Charming Sorceress!" cried William, with an air of rapture, "may I also declare a truth to you?—We are known to each other."

"You cannot know me," she said to him, with the most assured tone.

They were at this moment at an extremity

mity of the hall. The sorceress took off her mask, and William beheld a finely formed face, but the complexion was that of death, without the least movement or sign of life. He started back with the sudden shock; at that very instant several masks pressed between him and the sorceress, and when he recovered from his surprise, and would have again joined her, she had disappeared, and was not to be found in any of the apartments.

With Henrietta was her servant, the confidant of her secrets; she was also in disguise, acting by the instructions of her mistress.

When the masks had pressed between her mistress and the fortune-teller, she threw over the former a large black velvet cloak, in obedience to a preconcerted sign; her mistress then took her arm, and they hastened out of the room. The visage which Henrietta had shewn to William, was an extremely fine mask of wax, which had been taken from the dead face of a young lady, the friend of her aunt. By her

her words, and the illusion of her appearance, she intended to make a strong impression upon William, and she had not deceived herself.

"Is Henrietta in the room?" said William, the moment he encountered Rhodolphus.

"No, she is in the country."

"I could swear that she had been here."

William repeated so frequently, and in so singular a manner, his assertion, that Henrietta must have been in the rooms, that Rhodolphus was seized with an indefinable inquietude, and proceeded immediately to her aunt's house. He questioned the servants under a plausible excuse, and returned convinced that she was not in town.

William was not the less persuaded that Henrietta had been at the masquerade, and he even suspected that she was still in some of the apartments.

This obstinate persuasion increased the apprehensions of Rhodolphus; after a

silence

silence of some time, he exclaimed suddenly, "I will know whether you have deceived yourself or not."

They mounted their horses before day-break, and went to the neighbourhood of the house where Henrietta was on her visit. When the family was risen, Rhodolphus went alone to the house; he asked for Henrietta, and was informed that, early on the preceding evening, she had returned from a walk, much indisposed, and had gone immediately to bed, and was not yet risen.

"You were deceived," said Rhodolphus, when he returned to his friend; "Henrietta went indisposed to bed at six o'clock in the evening, and is not yet risen."

William was then persuaded that the sorceress was not Henrietta, and was utterly at a loss to imagine who that person could be; he then related the scene to Rhodolphus, with, however, some little change in parts of the conversation; the death-like visage of the unknown had again struck

struck his imagination, and these words haunted his mind. *Is thy fate alone irrevocable?* His hopes tempted him with the possibility that Henrietta's engagement with Rhodolphus might, by some unforeseen accident, be finally dissolved.

The advancement of Rhodolphus, to some profitable establishment was not, he found, so near at hand, as he had imagined, and he frequently declared, that he would make another journey to Russia, if he did not speedily obtain a place. The principal cause of this new plan, was that his manner of living was too expensive for his means, which a false shame deterred him from reducing.

William now shunned Henrietta's presence more studiouly than ever, and she despaired of ever obtaining her object; while she blushed at the folly of ever having made the attempt. Her attachment to Rhodolphus hence acquired new force, and this affair would have terminated according to his ardent wishes, if his own

impatience had not destroyed what time was preparing for him.

In a company of friends, the conversation fell on the passions, particularly that of love; Rhodolphus maintained with unusual vehemence, that a resolute man might govern the most vehement passion; his opinion was as warmly opposed. "I once knew a man," he said, "transported with the passion of love, beyond all expression; who nevertheless, knew how to make it subservient to his reason."

"To assert that of another, is a little bold," was the general answer.

"Yet I dare maintain it positively; Mademoiselle Bellmann can attest, that I am well acquainted of what he is capable, and do not say too much."

"Yes," said Henrietta blushing, "you know the person you allude to, well enough to judge of his resolution; you only forget that your hero had once a moment of weakness, and declared his passion to the object he loved although he had resolved to be silent."

"I con-

"I confess I had forgot that circumstance; he was weak for a moment, but he was placed in an unforeseen situation, and he has since displayed more courage than even you expected."

Rhodolphus said this without any design; but Henrietta thought she read in his looks a secret triumph over her weakness: she blushed excessively, and replied with evident anger, "You venture too far in advancing your own opinion for mine; the courage of your friend is not so great as you imagine."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE QUARREL.

WHEN Rhodolphus went the next morning to see Henrietta, she betrayed a most perverse humour, and complained that she was not well: she answered all his questions by yes, or no, and at last declared that she should be extremely offended,

 if

if he did not leave her. The two following days she was in the same temper; she was not indeed so rude as on the former day; on the contrary, she affected to be peculiarly attentive to him, but a word, a look, was enough to put her in ill humour. This was so apparent to Rhodolphus, that at length he lost his patience; then she was all submission, patiently supported his reproaches, and promised to amend her fault, which indeed she did during two days.

Rhodolphus exulted, while he observed how much empire he had acquired over Henrietta; and thought by a little remonstrance, he should withdraw her from this unusual petulance: but her caprices augmented at every new interview, and his reproaches were more and more severe. She then besought his forgiveness, and bitterly deplored her misfortune in giving him so much uneasiness.

This warfare continued for some time. "You have strange phantasies," said Rho-

dolphus,

dolphus, in a manner that was not very gentle.

"You think so, because you no longer love me: if you loved me, you could not treat me with such cruelty; I have owned my love for you, and you triumph over my weakness."

Rhodolphus began seriously to question what was his situation with Henrietta. She never avowed her love with less reserve; she had never lavished upon him so many tender expressions; yet she never so effectually tried his patience, and destroyed his peace. The most effectual method, he thought, to put an end to this wanton indulgence of her caprice, was to menace her with quitting her for ever. When he used this expedient, she seemed instantly to return to herself. Presuming upon his power, he declared to her in plain terms that he would no longer endure this fluctuating temper. Her apprehensive looks, her agitated frame, encouraged him to go on; now thinking himself secure of victory. She had replied to

some of his reproaches, "You no longer love me, Rhodolphus."

"That depends upon yourself," said he, coldly: "and now, once for all, know that these scenes can be no longer repeated."

"I thought so," she cried, suddenly changing her air and manner. "I was willing to spare you the pain of declaring that you no longer love me. There was no need of all these artifices to spare my sensibility: I shall not melt into tears or rend my hair, because you are unfaithful. I have long enough supported your tyranny. You have commanded me as if I were your slave: but it was fit I should know how far your triumph would proceed. At present, I understand your views; and I owe it to myself to declare, that here all our intercourse ends." She then curtsied with great solemnity, and withdrew to her own apartment.

Rhodolphus remained immoveable. His astonishment and terror were extreme; yet he still hoped that he should see her

return

return in tears. She did not return, and he resolved if possible to see her.

With difficulty he obtained an audience. "Do you not feel, M. Buchling," she said, "that any renewal of our intercourse not only would be, but ought to be, painful to me? I must have a mean conception of what is due to my sex, if I were to beseech you not to abandon me. Go, Sir; you wish to appear innocent of the fault of this rupture; it shall be so; be the fault mine. I have only to add, that I will never hear a word on this subject."

Rhodolphus appealed to his ungovernable love for her. "I consider," she replied, "the affair to be the more desperate for that. If you love me, and could use me thus cruelly, what had I to expect? But, Sir, I am no longer to be managed."

Henrietta remained so immoveable to all his entreaties, that at length he was transported with the most violent rage, and reproached her in terms such as he had never before ventured to use. She was calm in the midst of this storm of pas-

sion, merely saying, "You love me, and can use this handsome language."

This insulting tone carried his rage beyond all bounds, and he quitted her with a resolution never to see her more.

"I am my own mistress again," said Henrietta gaily, as she heard him descend the staircase, "and we shall see if his hero will not soon be at my feet."

The repentance of Rhodolphus was as vehement as his anger. He still confided in the influence of Henrietta's love, and thought she would still be appeased. He forbore during several days to call at her house, and then made his visit at an hour when he knew Henrietta was surrounded with company. She received him with great politeness, and even testified pleasure. Rhodolphus was certain of a victory. The company retired, and Henrietta immediately withdrew, leaving him alone with her aunt. After some time, he asked for her, and was told she was gone to visit friend.

She continued to prevent all opportunity of

of his speaking to her alone. Before company she behaved to him with a studied politeness, but nothing further. He wrote her a letter expressive of the sincerest and most humble repentance, which she answered with perfect coldness. He then endeavoured to gain an interview with her, but she resolved at least to see to what excess a man can carry his submission, and treated him with the utmost haughtiness of an offended female.

At length Rhodolphus perceived that her conduct changed to disdain. This he could not endure. He wrote a note to William, requesting his immediate presence; committed some papers to his care, and gave him some commissions to execute; during which he prepared for a journey.

"I am going to Russia," he said; "I no longer expect to be the husband of Henrietta."

"Is that possible?" cried William.

Rhodolphus related all that had passed, but William could not seize the clue.

 "I un-

"I understand her as little as you do. I suspect we have been too indulgent to this capricious child; and in truth have made too much of her." William observed that she must have been justly offended with his late imperious conduct. Rhodolphus was silent. After a long pause on both sides, Rhodolphus said, "You love her, William: you shall see her again."

"No," replied William, "never."

"I demand this of your friendship. You will soon perceive if she still loves me; in that case I will return: yet I am much persuaded that she has never had any serious regard for me. At present I need not hesitate to declare, that you have not been indifferent to her, and I have sometimes harboured a suspicion that this quarrel would happen from her preference to you."

"Impossible!" uttered William with terror, which, however, was instantly followed by a secret feeling not unmingled with pleasure.

"I may deceive myself, but even that induces

induces me to hope that you will see her. Visit her as an acquaintance, a friend, or a lover, whichever you prefer. William, I confide a sacred trust to you: if she really loves me, then you shall tell me so, and I will return. If one unextinguished spark of affection remains in her heart, then, William, be my friend! forbear to extinguish it! but if she loves you, be happy! I may envy your fate, but I shall not cease to love you."

William sought to convince his friend, that he ought not to leave the country. As he failed in this, he repeated his resolution never more to see Henrietta.

"You ought to see her," said Rhodolphus, with some degree of resentment. "The happiness of both of us need not be wrecked!"

William at length yielded, promising to see Henrietta. He accompanied his friend the first post. Rhodolphus, in bidding him adieu, said, "I place a precious deposit in your hands—William, be my friend!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE VISIT.

ON the following morning, at the hour of the usual visit of Rhodolphus, Henrietta was seated on her sopha, elegantly dressed and adorned with all the costly ornaments with which her lover had from time to time presented her. As it was her intention to make her peace with him on that day, she impatiently looked for his appearance, but instead of Rhodolphus, William was announced: he entered the apartment with a confused and embarrassed air: "My friend," said he, "at the moment of his indispensable departure for Russia, charged me to wait on you——" At these words Henrietta trembled and turned pale: had William looked at her he had been at once convinced, Rhodolphus was far from indifferent to her; but he, whose agitation increased with every passing instant, kept his eyes fixed on the ground,

ground, and had not the power to proceed. Henrietta, after a short struggle, recovered her composure.

"Was he then in such extreme haste," she said, "that he had not even time to write a card?"

Henrietta instantly and with great address turned the conversation on William's views, spoke of their respective families, and assured him, that, according to the promise she had given on his first arrival at that city, she had forborne to name him in her letters to her parents, and commended his resolution of keeping himself estranged from the Collector's family, till he should be successful enough to possess a decided occupation.

Whenever William returned to the subject of Rhodolphus, Henrietta artfully evaded answering to his remarks, and instantly drew his attention to other matters. At length her aunt entered the parlour, and a hint from Henrietta procured William an invitation to dine on the following day.

As soon as he was gone, Henrietta dispatched a messenger to the house of Rhodolphus, to know if he was really departed, the truth of which she had hitherto doubted. From her messenger she learned, that all his effects were left behind, having only taken with him a change of clothes in a small portmanteau.

"When does your friend return?" she asked of William the next day. William, colouring deeply, replied, "that depends on some particular information that I am to convey to him."

"Then his return depends on you?"

"Not on me," replied William with an air of constraint; and he took the opportunity of these inquiries on the part of Henrietta, to make an animated eulogium on his friend. Henrietta listened coldly. Not a word, not a look, betrayed that she took the smallest interest in Rhodolphus, and scarcely had William ceased speaking than she gaily invited him to follow the example of M. Buchling, and visit her every day.

"What

"What two singular characters!" said Henrietta when William had taken his leave; "the one confides to the other his mistress, and he, who adores her not less than the declared lover, speaks not for himself but for his friend. The confidence of Rhodolphus in me and William is so noble, that I am tempted instantly to recall him—yet I will delay it a little while longer, for I am very desirous to know how far William will carry his generosity --he certainly cannot support it long."

She deceived herself. William visited her daily, and still dwelt upon the virtues and constant passion of Rhodolphus. Henrietta artfully threw temptations in his way, but William indulged not in the slightest testimony of his own love, while he painted in glowing colours the love of his friend.

To Henrietta such courage and fidelity had appeared impossible. She was not only surprised, she was almost subdued by it. She hesitated between her inclination for Rhodolphus and the pride of

being beloved by a man of so elevated a soul: sometimes she doubted which of the two she loved the most—in truth she loved neither: each had filled her imagination, but neither had touched her heart. Inured from her childhood to look only through the medium of her vanity, and to keep her heart in subjection to her head, she had become incapable of loving, though she sometimes mistook the prompt emotions of vanity for the indications of that passion.

At length Henrietta forbade William to speak any more on behalf of his friend: this was done in a manner so apparently devoid of either interest or sentiment, that William could no longer doubt of her indifference to Rhodolphus.

From thence he was silent on the love of his friend, but he was equally silent on his own. Yet his visits became more and more frequent; in her presence he was overmastered by his feelings, his eyes incessantly followed her, his love incessantly betrayed itself in despight of his secret

and

and constant struggles, and his passion was the theme of every one's conversation with Henrietta but his.

Henrietta was not insensible to these marks of a passion, restrained only in its expression by the most refined sentiments of honour; and at the end of some months she had resolved to give herself to William, but the more constantly she observed him, and the stronger her inclination towards him grew, the more she became convinced she must employ different means to subdue his resolution, from those that might be employed with a man of ordinary character.

No sooner had she determined to be his than she adopted new manners. She became more simple, more equal; she treated him with the respect and confidence of the most affectionate friendship, yet betrayed not a symptom of her attachment. She occasionally spoke with a kind of tender recollection of her past engagements with Rhodolphus, carefully intimating at the same time, that it would

have

have been truly unfortunate for both had they united their destinies.

William had long entertained the most decided conviction, that there existed no hope for his friend, and about this epoch the letters of Rhodolphus, which at first breathed nothing but despair, announced a tranquil resignation to his disappointment. He spoke even of the agreeable life he led in Russia, and jestingly inquired, how William prospered with Henrietta? William beheld with rapture the approach of that moment when, with a blameless conscience, he might fall at the feet of Henrietta, and say, *I love.*

All circumstances seemed to combine to perfect the fulfilment of the dearest wish of his soul. He was already appointed secretary to the council of the department of the mines, in which situation his activity, his knowledge, and his judgment procured him the most marked consideration. A memorial drawn up by him, on some occasion relative to his office, had been shewn to persons in power at a neighbouring

bouring court, from whom he received offers of the most advantageous nature. These proposals he communicated to his present patrons, and they, unwilling to lose his services, promised to seize the first occasion of further promoting him.

The aunt of Henrietta was also one of his warmest friends, and would have openly encouraged him to address her niece had not Henrietta requested the matter might be left wholly to her management. Her aunt readily promised that, but was not strictly faithful to her word; she could not forbear a few significant looks, and other intimations of her willing encouragement of his attentions to Henrietta.

The prospects of William were now illuminated with the brightest sunshine of hope. He waited but for one more letter from Rhodolphus, in which he should seriously approve his design, ere he should avow his love.

The desired moment approached. Two places became vacant, and were offered to

the choice of William; the one very advantageous in point of profit, but in a remote province, and scarcely distinguished by any title; the other was that of a counsellor of the mines, the emoluments of which were trifling, but it was a post at court, and the title of counsellor was respectable. William, without a moment's hesitation, had decided on the former; but the aunt of Henrietta had so eternally discoursed on the advantages of a title, that he was undetermined—he submitted the choice to Henrietta.

"Is it possible you can hesitate!" said the aunt. "Are you for a moment at a loss to choose between the title of Counsellor and being called Mr. Inspector?"

"But the revenue, madam, and the situation—the calm delights of a country life."

"A country life! Ah, don't speak of it. As to the revenue, for the loss of that, a rich wife will make amends; and if you have good sense, my friend, you need not be without one."

Henrietta

Henrietta addressed him with a blush, "then you would abandon us, dear William?"

"Abandon you!" he repeated, casting on her the kindling glance of love.

"Abandon us!" also repeated the aunt, "he cannot entertain such an idea. But if he imagines that a pretty woman can support the *ennui* of a country life he strangely deceives himself."

"Henrietta, choose for me; and if a heart filled with a passion that knows no bounds appears worthy of being made happy, choose also for yourself."

The hand of Henrietta, which he held, he placed before his eyes to hide the starting tear, and remained in that position till a loud laugh from the aunt restored him to himself, when raising his head he observed the eyes of Henrietta were likewise suffused with tears—the tears of love! William at that moment thought her celestial.

"Speak, adorable Julia!" exclaimed the aunt with a theatrical tone.

Henrietta pressed the hand of William.

"At least decide on which he ought to be, counsellor or inspector."

"How can I think of titles in such a moment as this? I will call him lover!— my lover."

"I say he ought to be a counsellor," cried the aunt in a louder tone, and considerably out of humour.

"Yes, I will be a counsellor," said William, and in his raptures he almost stifled the good lady with his embraces.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE RESOLUTION.

NOT until William was alone in his own apartment could he view, with any composure, the extent of his happiness. When the agitation of his spirits had in a degree subsided, he wrote to the minister to request he might be appointed to the place of counsellor of the department of the

the mines; he then put the letter unsealed in his pocket, and repaired to Henrietta. "Such then is your wish!" she said when she had read the letter.

"I have no wish but yours," he replied; "if I had made a choice I should have preferred the tranquil pleasures of the country, but wherever I am with you I shall be the happiest of men."

Just then a servant brought Henrietta a letter.

"'Tis from my father," she said. The contents appeared to cause her trouble; she seemed to hesitate how to address William; at length she said, "yes, you ought to know it," and gave him the letter.

"My parents! are they in good health?" demanded William with alarm.

"Yes! yes! but read."

William read and grew pale; sighs burst from his heart and tears dropped upon the paper. "Merciful God!" he exclaimed, "hast thou ceased to protect these virtuous beings!"

Henrietta tenderly took his hand.

"Dear William, do not despair; cannot we fly to the succour of this unfortunate family?"

"We can! we can! good Henrietta!" he replied in a voice broken by sobs. "But to think they have sustained these evils already so long, without support, without consolation! It is that, that rends my heart; it is the past I weep for, the future I will make happy—Oh there does not exist upon this earth, a pleasure equal to that of having the power to testify gratitude to one's benefactors!" He seized his hat.

Henrietta caught his arm, "Dear William, be not so precipitate; you ought first to take into consideration the manner of doing that."

"No! no! not a moment—yet—yes I must immediately write another letter to the minister, for I must now ask for the place of inspector. You know how indispensable the quiet and retirement of the country must be to the comfort of the good Collector and his brother."

Henrietta

Henrietta smiled. "Is it necessary that you live in the country, because they live in the country? or is it, that you have any intention of taking the Collector's family to reside with you?"

"Certainly; how can it be otherwise? without doubt, they shall reside with me."

"You must not think of it—what! cannot one relieve the distresses of unfortunate persons, without dwelling under the same roof with them? Consider—"

"Dear Henrietta, you forget that I am the son, the cherished son of these unfortunate persons. I see them now; care and penury furrow their cheeks!—On me they cast their eyes, dimmed with the tears of affliction!—And shall I content myself with heaping on them benefactions, wherewith the proud man quells the importunity of the beggar? I owe them love, not gold, and when I forget to repay them in that kind, may God forget me! may I become an outcast from myself.—No! no!

 never;

never; where I abide there shall they abide with me."

"And if, dear William!" said Henrietta, smiling and fondly pressing his hand, "I were the price of this sacrifice!—"

"You, Henrietta! you the price of a bad action, of ingratitude, of an odious inhumanity?"

"Your imagination always creates monsters; you should learn to view objects through a clearer medium; if the Collector had still retained his place, you would have continued to live separately, consider that."

"I have nothing to consider, dear Henrietta! my benefactors are poor, unfortunate, without support, without shelter; I am rich; in the bosom of happiness, surrounded by protectors. My house will contain two families: they shall come to me—I will fly to meet them, and bring them to their home!"

"No! assuredly not—at least not so suddenly—you should reflect—"

"Reflect! on what?"

"That

"That Rautenbach will never consent to live in the great world."

"Very well, I will quit the great world."

"It will soon have its revenge on you, for say what you will, dear William, you love this great world little less than I do!"

"Yes; but I love still more the peace of my own heart."

Then came the aunt, to whom Henrietta said, that William had resolved to take home to him the family of the Collector, who had fallen into a decay of fortune, and that she could not forbear to anticipate the disagreeable scenes, which would be the inevitable result of this reunion.

"Oh, he does not mean it; it is impossible: write to these good people, my dear friend, tell them you are ready to grant them every assistance your circumstances will permit. But to make them a part of your family! that is beyond common sense."

"Yet, I cannot do otherwise."

"Then resign your pretensions to the

hand of Henrietta," said the aunt haughtily.

The colour forsook the cheeks of William, his lips quivered. The aunt repeated her menace, and pressed him to decide. "They are my parents! my benefactors! ——Dear Henrietta!"

"You hear my aunt's declaration; I think it is a very simple question to decide."

"No! no! I will do my duty—I will engage them to partake my house—I will declare to them that all I possess is theirs."

"This indeed becomes very serious," said the aunt. "It is fortunate, Sir, that you have given us timely notice of your noble resolution; I hope at least you do not expect to include the fortune of Henrietta in your liberal donations." And she quitted the apartment.

"Dear Henrietta," said William, after a long pause, "is not the tone of your aunt very harsh and unjust?"

"The tone!—Yes—Perhaps so.—But, William, confess now, that this extravagant

gant enthusiasm for your friends, may well awaken my aunt's prudence to reflect on the consequences to me."

William mused deeply, and again, after some minutes of silence, he exclaimed, "Yes, if the Collector consents to live with me, I shall receive him with joy although——"

"Although you give up me—Is not that what you would say?"

"My beloved Henrietta!—I cannot, I dare not deny it. The end of all this, I do not know, but I am fixed to obey my duty."

"You have only to choose between me and the Collector."

"I have already said, that I have not to choose, if I would not be an ingrate. I love you beyond the whole world—above my life—but I cannot become a villain, even for the love of you."

"Will you cede nothing to me?—Oh William!—Bethink you!—"

"You agonise me, dear Henrietta!—My resolution is immoveable."

 "Well,

" Well, then ; if you do bring the Collector to live with you, our connection is at an end for ever : I leave you to your own thoughts." And coldly curtsying she retired to her cabinet.

William trembled in every joint. " Is it possible !" he exclaimed ; " can she for this reject my heart?" He followed to the cabinet.

Henrietta heard his footstep and secretly exulted in his defeat, yet she would extend her triumph to the utmost, and said to him : " You forget that every moment you give to me is an injury to your unfortunate friends."

" You are in the right," said William, and without another word, he precipitately left the apartment and the house.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE COLLECTOR AND HIS FAMILY.

THE *Syndic* Biemann never forgot an affront. As soon as it became known in the village, that William had quitted the house of the Collector, that Antonia might possess an undivided inheritance, the son of Biemann renewed his hopes and his addresses to Antonia. She heard him with politeness, but maintained the steadfastness of her first refusal. Recollecting some circumstances of her former behaviour to him, he could not forbear to think, she had designed to amuse herself at his expence. He imparted his suspicion to his father, who readily adopted the idea, and vowed to avenge the insult.

The Collector had occasionally deviated from the ordinary forms of his office; he had also made innovations, and had even been culpable of some negligence: he was emboldened by the protection and

friendship of the president of that department, and two processes that had been commenced against him were terminated in his favour.

With malignant and indefatigable research Biemann collected together all the facts and minutest circumstances, that might be represented in a light unfavourable to the Collector. Already he had prepared his accusations in secret, and glutted his malevolence with the anticipated ruin of an innocent man; while his outward deportment was always dressed with smiles. Yet smile as constantly as he would, the Collector knew he loved him not, and said one day to the Lieutenant, "The Syndic has of late become very kind—let us beware: great heat often portends a storm! Brother! I fear God! and not man; because I am mortal as is my enemy."

"I fear God! brother," replied the Lieutenant, "because I am immortal."

"That will again prove to you," said the Collector, "that every principle of action has its opposite principle, and both

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may be equally just. We ought to be very cautious how we decide upon the motives of men, brother." Yet an hour afterwards, in the presence of the *Syndic*, he uttered the most violent philippic against the prince, his ministers, and the whole constitution of the Germanic empire.

The *Syndic* bowed his head. Ah! thought he, if the minister were informed of that! On the following day, he wrote the Collector a letter, in which he combated with considerable address, the arguments the Collector had advanced. It happened that the Collector was in very good humour, and replied not merely by a laconic billet of scarcely more than a line, as he usually did, but by a long letter; in which he confirmed his former assertions with the severest satire.

The *Syndic* carefully preserved this letter as the surest engine of his diabolical plot.

The president, the friend of Rautenbach, died, and the *Syndic*'s intrigues commenced. The first accusations against the Collector were received with derision, for

they were but the old complaints put into new words. Soon the process wore a more serious aspect; the Lieutenant became alarmed; Madame Rautenbach lost all her courage; but the Collector did nothing but laugh, and instead of seeking out witnessess and refuting allegations, employed himself in drawing up an eloquent and powerful memorial against calumny and injustice. He was at this time conditionally suspended from the functions of his office, till the process should be decided; and then the accusations against him increased surprisingly: notwithstanding which, his known integrity would have borne him through, and the affair had terminated wholly to his advantage, but for the letter the *Syndic* now conveyed to the minister. Assertions so daring, satire so galling, irritated and astonished the minister; he considered it to be his duty to make an example of a man who could boldly express himself thus on the government of his country. The process was decided against the Collector; he was condemned

condemned to pay all costs and deprived of his office.

When the Collector heard the sentence read, he said with firmness, "I bow to the will of God, my brother! If I had no wife, if Antonia were not here, then I should say, the thunderbolt had crushed me; now it has but overthrown me. I am poor, but I have them and my conscience, and they will sustain my courage. Dearest brother, do not look on me thus."

The Lieutenant quitted the room to give vent to his tears.

The costs of the suit were beyond the Collector's means, and he was threatened with a prison; but the Lieutenant made up the deficiency without the Collector's knowledge. When every thing was settled, and a new Collector came to assume his office in the village, M. Rautenbach first learned that the Lieutenant had sacrificed a large portion of his income. He grasped his hand, and said, "What remains to us but the tomb? Alas! my brother!"

"We are poor," said the Lieutenant, "poorer even than you imagine, but view the man who digs the earth for his daily support, he would deem himself rich with the half of what we yet possess. You ask what remains to us? bread, pure consciences, and feeling hearts."

The Lieutenant pronounced these words in a broken voice, and tears rolled down his cheeks. He did not fear poverty for himself, nor for his brother, but the despair of Madame Rautenbach, who yet thought only of the loss of the collectorship, supposed they had money enough remaining to live upon, with a few privations, and a more strict economy. His trembling accents, and his tears, reanimated the Collector's courage. He extended his hand to the Lieutenant, and said, "My dear brother, forget not our principal consolation, God! who will not lay more upon us than we have strength to bear."

The Lieutenant sighed—"May God give

us strength to bear whatever may befall us! But my poor sister!"

The countenance of the Collector changed a little, and the Lieutenant continued, "Our misfortunes have not made us really unhappy, but the manner in which your wife may bear them may disconcert our fortitude. Her tears, her sorrows; these are what I must fear. These may render us truly unhappy."

"No, no," replied the Collector, "she will have more courage."

"I have my fears," said the Lieutenant, with a sorrowful air, "for you love her most tenderly, and so do I, brother; her despair will be the most grievous of all our afflictions."

"You think my wife less courageous than she really is. I tell you, she will have more resolution than you expect.—She will, indeed, at first be more sensibly affected than either of us, by our poverty; but I know she will resist her sorrows, and in the end conquer them. We have greater courage for the onset, but she has more

more patience. I am anxious only to find the best means of informing her that we are poorer than she believes. I tremble merely for that moment when I shall say to her, "Dear wife, we are reduced to the utmost poverty."

The Collector, without knowing it, had fallen on the best means of acquainting his wife with the extent of her misfortune; for during this conversation she was accidentally in an adjoining room, the door of which stood open, and had heard all that passed. She had trembled at their present situation, and dreaded the future, but her husband's praises had restored her courage, and those endearing words of the Lieutenant, *for you love her most tenderly, and so do I, brother*, inspired her with the determination to be found worthy of their affection. She resolved to fulfil her husband's prophecy, and sought to triumph over her terrors, in which she at length succeeded.

She retired without being perceived, and went directly to Antonia. She wished to make an essay of her own fortitude

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in laying before Antonia the new circumstance of their misfortune.

"Antonia," said she, "listen to me. I have to tell you of new misfortunes; but, my dear child, we must support with courage the afflictions with which God pleases to visit us. We are still poorer than we imagined. Your grand-father and his brother think that I am ignorant of what has befallen us; yet I have just learnt, that the Lieutenant has sacrificed a great part of his own fortune to save your grand-father from further distress."

Antonia turned pale; Madame Rautenbach continued, with a composed air, "All things in this life are transitory; above all, the blessings of prosperity are most uncertain. We must resign ourselves to the will of Heaven; and after all, my love, what will be our loss? We shall dwell in a cottage, eat of the plainest food, wear the most simple garments, but by labour, and a life suited to our new situation we may still be happy."

Antonia was struck with admiration at the

the calm and resigned temper of Madame Rautenbahc; she kissed her with the tenderest affection, and could speak of nothing but her admirable courage. This behaviour was a balm to the heart of Madame Rautenbach. She resolved to accost her husband and the Lieutenant with the calmness of a determined mind, of which she knew neither one nor the other thought her altogether capable.

The Collector had formed the design to open the matter to his wife that same day. He began with a long and solemn introduction, which she interrupted with a smile—"You have some new misfortune to declare to me? perhaps I have guessed what it is."

"Well, my wife, let us hear what it is." He affected to utter these words with composure, but did not entirely succeed.

"We are still poorer than we thought, for your brother has given part of his property to your necessities. Is it not so? I read your answer, my dear husband, in your eyes; but we have something left, if

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it is only in our courage, and in knowing how to moderate our wishes. With these we are still rich enough. Antonia and I have been talking the matter over. Well, Antonia, have I not spoken for us both?"

The Lieutenant rose from his chair, and kissed his sister's hand; and he looked at her with inexpressible admiration.

The Collector beheld her with astonishment—"My dear wife," he said with a broken voice, "God bless you! I render thanks to Heaven for having given me such a wife!" He threw his arms round her with the most respectful love. The two brothers then acknowledged the extent of their misfortune, during which her countenance maintained the most perfect serenity.

"We are still," she said, "rich, in all that is most desirable in this world." She then began to detail, with the same composure, the little arrangements of comfort they might still make in their new situation.

The Collector was not so tranquil. He

paced

paced the room with great agitation: he seldom wept; but now the tears rolled down his cheeks; yet his eyes sparkled through his tears with joy. Suddenly he took his wife in his arms—"Admirable woman!" he cried, "God is my witness that no moment of my life has ever been so happy. Ah! brother! I am proud to be this woman's husband."

Never had the Collector rendered such homage to his wife. He placed himself beside her, and the tears still fell upon his cheeks.

The Lieutenant and Antonia looked on them both with great emotion. After some time they all vowed to each other an eternal love, and reciprocally promised an unshaken courage.

"Oh! why is not our William here?" said the Collector.

"Have you learnt," said his wife, "who has been the cause of our misfortune?"

"Yes," he replied, "and for a moment thought of the means of vengeance; but God

God forgive him! for I have forgiven him."

"God forgive him!" they all repeated with the sincerest hearts.

The few days they had to remain in the house attached to the collectorship were soon passed. The new Collector had arrived in the village, and the following day the family were for ever to quit the habitation in which they had so long enjoyed an almost undisturbed happiness. Till the hour arrived, Madame Rautenbach maintained her fortitude, but then a profound grief overwhelmed her; with which, however, she struggled, that she might not afflict her husband and the Lieutenant.

In packing up, the Collector found the speech he had composed on taking possession of his office, which was now twenty years since. He took it up, and shewed it to his brother.

"Oh, ho!" said the Lieutenant, "have we got the speech at last? Now you shall

read

read the whole of it, we only heard the half."

"This is a little singular," said the Collector, "I read the beginning of my speech on the day on which I took possession of this house, and I am going to read the remainder on the very day on which we must quit it. Well, then!"

He read till he came to the words, *Oh, why have I not a child! Why is my brother childless!* "Here," said the Collector, laying down the paper—"the Lieutenant cried, *Brother, I have a child;* and thus put an end to the reading of the speech. You see, brother, that God granted the wishes of our hearts—William and Antonia!—I wrote that more than twenty years since, and now, Antonia, I lean my arm on thine. Why cannot I lean my other on William?"

"Do not speak of William, brother! I cannot bear that at present. I beseech thee to go on with thy speech."

The Collector continued to read: "but wherefore

wherefore do we for ever complain; is there a being so unfortunate on whom a ray of hope does not shine, as the first rays of the sun penetrate through the darkness of night? Does not the light of eternal life rise upon the unfortunate, as the sun in the midst of darkness? Is not the unfortunate permitted to unfold all his griefs to the being whom he loves, and by whom he is beloved? God of infinite goodness! can this consolation be taken from the most unhappy of the human race? If he is alone in the world, if he has not a single friend to whom he can communicate his sorrows, may he not cast his eyes to heaven? Will he not there find a friend, a protector, a father? If misfortune must ever enter within the threshold of my door, ah! let it be in the form of a weeping angel! not as a fury to destroy the tranquillity of my soul.

"Dark and small is our last abode, but there is peace. Let me approach it with resignation, even with pleasure. And, oh!

oh! if ever I must quit this dwelling, let it be with the same resignation, with the same pleasure which I felt when I entered it.

"Ah! I have one more wish, but I desire what is impossible; yet it is the nature of man to form new wishes. May we all, my wife, my brother, and I, quit this dwelling at the same instant."

"Alas!" said Madame Rautenbach, "your wish is accomplished. We all quit this house at the same instant. How inconsiderate are the prayers we often address to Heaven!"

The Collector continued his speech without observation. "My wife, clothed with joy like the bride at the altar, will give me her hand, and go with me wherever fate shall conduct us. Then we will go forth."

"Then!" cried the Lieutenant, springing up and embracing the Collector and his wife, "then we will go where God shall conduct us—into a cottage, or into the tomb."

"I beg

"I beg your pardon, brother," he said, suddenly recollecting himself, "I have interrupted your speech."

"No; the speech is ended, and could it end more happily? Thus embracing each other, we will go with joy and tranquillity, we will go where Heaven may please to conduct us."

They then embraced each other, and retired to rest with that peace of mind which results from a satisfied conscience.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE REVENGE.

THE next day the new Collector came to take possession of his house. Rautenbach went out to meet him, and said, with the simplicity of a generous mind, "Welcome to your new habitation." The countenance of this man was dark and severe. He coldly demanded when he might

take

take possession? Rautenbach answered mildly, "within two hours."

When his successor had departed he went in, and sat down with the family to breakfast. His wife had appeared sorrowful the whole morning and on the arrival of the new Collector she could not disguise her agitation. Her husband kindly entreated her to recal her courage. "Although this departure," she said, "is the most painful event of my life, still I shall go with pleasure: one request only I have to make to you."

They all listened with great attention. "You have hired a small house for us in the village, but I cannot support the idea of remaining here, where we have enjoyed so much happiness. Do not take this for pride, dear husband! Indeed there is nothing of that in it; yet I confess that I cannot pass my time tranquilly here. Every thing we do will be misconstrued; if we are humble, we shall be accused of meanness; if we display more fortitude, we shall be reproached with pride. Here

I shall

I shall steep my head in tears, for I shall be the victim of disdain and rude jests."

"You are right, dear wife," replied the Collector, "be patient only for one day and ——"

"If you love me, do not let us stay an hour in this place. Cannot we go to Schlagdorf? The house is unoccupied, and the owner has made you an offer of it for the present: I conjure you let us instantly leave this town."

The Collector willingly consented.

This new arrangement occasioned some delay; for the furniture had been sent to the hired house, and the Lieutenant was dispatched to hasten them to Schlagdorf. The new Collector, therefore, arrived before the family had quitted the house. Rautenbach explained to him the cause of the delay. He replied, with an unrelenting countenance, "You ought to have thought of that sooner. You have disconcerted my measures." Rautenbach hastily put on his great coat, his wife

threw her shawl over her shoulders, Antonia was ready, and the Lieutenant returned at this moment to say that he had executed his commission, and that a carriage they had hired would be shortly there to convey them to Schlagdorf.

The family quitted their ancient habitation. The Collector's wife shed tears in abundance. She took her husband's hand and led him across the court that opened into the garden, which they passed through, and she conducted him into the wood, in which stood the Countess Elizabeth's chapel.

The family then sat down under the shade of some trees which had often been the witness of their former happiness.

"Without a shelter!" said Madame Rautenbach with a sigh.

"Under the most peaceful of all shelters," replied her husband, "under a pure and serene sky ——Yet I wish," he added to himself, "this carriage would arrive, for I tremble for the fortitude of us all,

especially

especially my poor wife, whose courage already fails."

At that moment the *Syndic*, Biemann, appeared at the entrance of the path. "See! see!" said the hypocrite with a fawning air, "they told me you were already departed for Schlagdorf. How is it that I find you here?"

Rautenbach rose, took him by the hand, and pointing to his family, said with a smile, "We have this day been compelled to abandon the house that long habit had rendered dear to us, and we are now seated under the shade of these trees because we have no roof to shelter us. You will believe M. Biemann that we must have felt a pang when we stept for the last time over the threshold of that door." The Syndic changed colour. "It is good, sometimes," continued the Collector, "to behold the spectacle of an afflicted and abandoned family: that now before your eyes I perceive affects you, and I am glad of it. I desire that the sight of an afflicted wife, a daughter in tears, of a man who

becomes himself poor to save another from worse evils; and, above all, the sight of the man who is deprived of fortune and reputation through your means, may change your heart. I hope in God that we are the first and only victims of your thirst of revenge."

"Ah, M. Rautenbach," said the pale and agitated *Syndic*, "you do me injustice —— you ——"

"Your conscience, Sir, tells you that I speak the truth. This letter from Counsellor Horn will prove to you that I know the whole of your projects. I did promise to be silent, and though it cost me much, I have kept silence until now. You, Sir, have rendered us poor, but not contemptible. You followed us hither to enjoy the odious triumph of your vengeance in beholding us driven from our home; it is that which has induced me to speak. I speak in your behalf. May this sight warn you from the commission of such another act. I forgive you; we all forgive you. Farewell! Repent and be happy."

The

The *Syndic* slunk from them overwhelmed with shame and remorse.

This scene had greatly affected the Lieutenant. He pressed the hand of his brother, exclaiming, "Generous elevated man! You knew your enemy, yet when we met him yesterday at the Pastor's not a word, not a look from you conveyed a reproach. Why was the *Syndic* your enemy?"

"Your praises, brother, are at once a reward and a censure. That we are seated here now is certainly his work, and yet the cause of the mischief may be traced to my vanity."

He then detailed the circumstance of the letter, which he confessed he had written neither from opinion or judgment, but from vanity. Madame Rautenbach congratulated herself on leaving the neighbourhood of the cruel and malignant Biemann. The conversation took a more gay and animated turn, and the hour in which they had expected the carriage to arrive had long since passed without their having noticed the delay.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WILLIAM'S ARRIVAL.

"I THINK there are moments," said the Lieutenant, in a tone of melancholy, "when we should turn our eyes from the contemplation of sublunary things, and fix them only on God."

"That is always, brother; for what would life be without the constant presence of God?"

"I think there are moments, when we cannot look for aid from man; when God alone can save us—I think—we, brother, are now in that case, and—"

"Dear brother," interrupted the Collector, "God wills not, that under the shade of these trees, rests the most hopeless of human beings; our misfortunes do not exact a miracle for their relief; I trust yet in man and in myself."

A man, breathless with speed, rushed into the wood. It was William, their beloved

loved William! their long lost William! He pressed them again and again in his arms. He would have said father! mother! sister! but sobs choked his utterance.

" William," at length said the Collec-
rage, my son! be a man!"

A further interval passed before William could answer, or the Collector was again able to address him with " What good angel led thee hither? Where hast thou been, poor wanderer?"

" I come to receive you to my home; you must all go with me."

" Your home! are you informed then —your home!"

" I am made an inspector of mines and forges! come, a carriage waits for us."

" Do you know our misfortunes?"

" Yes, I learned them two days since, from Mademoiselle Bellmann; her father had written to her; I got into a chaise and hastened hither."

" Then you were near Henrietta Bellmann!

mann! William, you never informed us of your fate; was that right?"

"My dear father," replied William, greatly confused, "I see that I ought to have written to you, from time to time; but who knows if—I had resolved to hide myself from [illegible] till [illegible] decided—yet I am yours; you, my dear parents, will live again for happiness; I shall possess an enchanting abode, and my income will be competent to satisfy all our wishes: the sun will not shine upon a family more happy than ours."

Madame Rautenbach clasped him in her arms, saying, "I now feel, there is indeed a God!"

"You ought also to feel that, in the arms of the Lieutenant or Antonia," said the Collector, somewhat displeased.

"Dear brother! do not take from her the belief, that the hand of God has conducted William hither."

"I am equally of that persuasion, brother: but you heard what she said; had

William

William not been sent, what would she have believed then?"

This little dispute was soon settled, and William related his history; he was silent only respecting his connection with Henrietta, and no one among them in the least suspected it; as the Pastor frequently described the prosperous life led by his daughter, and dwelt with complacency, on the expectation of her forming a noble and splendid alliance. At length the carriage arrived to conduct them to Schlagdorf, where it was agreed they should remain till William should be installed in his place, and had prepared his house for their reception.

The carriage being rather small for the accommodation of five persons, William held Antonia on his knees, and frequently during the ride, pressed her to him with brotherly affection. The two brothers made signs to each other, and Antonia perceiving their smiles, blushed, and rendered thanks to God, when the carriage stopt at their new habitation.

The brothers withdrew to converse together. "If, brother," said the Lieutenant, "the twins were at last to be named, William and Antonia."

"To confess the truth, this thought has never been out of my mind since we first stepped into the carriage; this poor girl, when he embraced her so kindly, she did not seem to be sitting on roses."

"I look on that as a happy presage, brother."

"I should do the same, had he been alone with her in the carriage; before the day passes, I will tell you what it really is."

When the Collector found William by himself, he demanded to be informed of the state of his heart. "You formerly loved Henrietta Bellmann, but your passion has subsided; is it not so?"

"I love her still," said William sighing, "I shall never cease to love her,"

"Hem! and what hopes can you conceive, after all that I have heard from her father?"

"I have almost abandoned the hope of obtaining her."

The Collector questioned him on the nature of his situation with Henrietta, and William knew not in what terms to couch his answers; he dared not avow that he had been so near his happiness, for then the good Collector would never have consented to become the obstacle to his felicity—he replied ambiguously, for he dared not even give the slightest intimation of the real case, although he firmly believed he should yet bring Henrietta to approve his conduct, and to unite with him in the performance of his grateful duties.

The Collector said to his brother, "The constellation will yet preserve their ancient names; but I do not quite despair, brother; William loves Henrietta, but it appears to me, that she shoots at some loftier mark; she is become too vain, too presuming."

Some days after, William left Schlagdorf, (where the family were to remain

another month) to arrange his affairs, and be inducted into his office. Peace had again taken possession of the hearts of the Collector, the Lieutenant, and Madame Rautenbach; but Antonia, from hour to hour, plunged deeper into melancholy.

"Would to God! brother," said the Lieutenant, "you could find the means to dissipate the sorrow of this dear girl!"

"It is a difficult enterprise; it cannot be done without giving birth to hope—I dare not employ that means."

"Why not? there may be still hope? you think there is."

"But after all, if we should be obliged to say, he still loves Henrietta! how should we endure her fading looks, which would ask at every instant, why did you bid me hope?"

The Lieutenant interrupted his brother with a trembling voice. "Poor child! she had began to subdue her love; to smile! to taste of repose! Brother, we must converse with Antonia; in the joyful prospect of

of living anew with William, we forgot the heart of our unfortunate daughter."

"Antonia," said the Collector in the kindest and gentlest manner, "this life does not always pass as smoothly as we wish, nor as roughly as we fear. Why are your eyes filled with tears? Sit down by us, my child, and speak freely."

Antonia would have evaded her confession, but the Collector interrupted her, saying, "You love William—that causes your griefs." Antonia confirmed his assertion with expressions of resignation to her fate.

The eyes of the Lieutenant filled with tears, and the Collector's emotion rendered him forgetful of his former resolution; he took her in his arms, and said, "Be of courage, dear Antonia! I foresee happy days for you. His love for Henrietta is on the decline: when he sees her no longer; when he lives in the country, with us and thee, I know he will forget her wholly—Yes, yes, it will be so—six weeks will complete every thing. Dearest child of my

my affection, I shall see thee a happy bride. My brother and I will dance at thy wedding."

Antonia covered her face with her hands to hide the anguish his words inflicted on her.

"Brother!" cried the Lieutenant, "our hearts will break! I feel it already."

"No, they will but palpitate with joy. Antonia, my love! be of good courage—I know what William said to me."

"If," said Antonia, "you know—if he has spoken to you, what hope is there for me but in the grave?"

"God protect her!" said the Lieutenant.

"Antonia!" again exclaimed the Collector, "thy happiness approaches."

She replied with a bitter smile, "Henrietta loves William! they are *affianced*."

The Collector shuddered. "How! hast thou learnt that of him?"

"Yes, dear father! they are affianced! Some formality delays the marriage—Perhaps we are the only hindrance!"

"Impos-

"Impossible! To me he said, I have almost abandoned the hope of obtaining her."

"Yes, *almost!*—Why did he not declare all to you. Dear father, I did encourage hope; I spoke to him of Henrietta; he was embarrassed, greatly embarrassed—Some words escaped, from which I understood they were affianced. His trouble and agitation increased. At length he seized my hand, exclaiming, "Oh sister! what happiness is it to me to receive you and our parents under my roof; yet had it not been for that happiness, I should be happy now."

"What meaning have these words, *had it not been for that happiness I should be happy now?*"

"I pressed him to explain the matter to me, but he eluded all my questions, and at last pretended he had not used these words. Ah!" continued Antonia, "I fear———"

On the Collector's countenance was imprinted a degree of anguish unusual to him

him. At length he said, "We will quit the subject for the present. It is one that deserves the maturest reflections." Soon after he held a conversation with Antonia alone, in which he made her repeat all that William had said, and now he was entirely convinced that William had concealed part of the story.

Antonia, firmly believing that the happiness of William had only been retarded by his generosity towards her parents, wrote an affecting letter to Henrietta on the fervor of his love for her, and the zeal of his gratitude to his benefactors. She conjured her friend not to disunite herself from William; and entreated she would explain, in two words, what was the obstacle to their union, which would be instantly removed, if it depended on the Collector or any of his family. When she had sealed and sent the letter, she looked on her fate as decided, and resumed her courage. "One of us two," she said, "ought to be happy. He sacrifices to us a fortunate love, and cannot I sacrifice to

him a love that is unfortunate?——Yes, one of us two ought to be happy, and it shall be him! him!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DISCOVERY.

WILLIAM returned to the city: he had restored his benefactors to happiness, and his own he believed would be accomplished—Henrietta's love would silence her objections, would subdue the pride of her aunt. These were the flattering illusions he constantly encouraged.

Henrietta meantime had reflected incessantly on her critical situation. To the noble conduct of her lover she could not refuse her admiration and esteem, but her pride, her vanity, her self-love, were equally incensed, to find that the possession of her hand was of less estimation in his eyes than the happiness of the Collector. She remarked that William did not deliver his mind to her government, and that

duty

duty was above every thing in his estimation.

She was more irritated than ever when informed that he had chosen the inspectorship. It was as much, she said, as formally, though silently, to renounce her [illegible] out the title of counsellor she could not consent to their union. Her aunt was yet more enraged, and loudly protested she would never more admit him within her doors. Henrietta calmed her anger by intimating that he might still be made a counsellor.

William on his return to the city presented himself before Henrietta; he was received like any other person, and invited to dinner on the next day. On the morrow he vainly sought to engage her in a private conversation before they placed themselves at table, but in the course of the afternoon she gave him the opportunity. With a cold and almost repulsive air, she inquired if he had yet seen the Collector and his family? He described the anguish

anguish he had endured, when arriving at the peaceful abode of his infancy, he had been met by a man who in harsh and repulsive accents told him—The disgraced M. Rautenbach had quitted for ever that dwelling.—“The disgraced M. Rautenbach! Oh! Henrietta, how those words sunk into my heart. Where then, I exclaimed, does he abide?”

“Where?” said the man sarcastically, “under the roof of heaven. If you go through the garden you will find him in the wood with the rest of them.” I hastily and in agony traversed the garden: at length I perceived them resting on the ground, and I flew into their arms.”

Henrietta's heart melted. “Good God!” she cried, sobbing, “without a house! without a home! Is it possible! Did not my father know it?”

William terminated his recital with the name of the place where the Collector and the Collector's family were to dwell; he had not courage to say “till they dwell with me.” He might have said it, for Henrietta

rietta was at that moment so subdued by the example of his feelings, that she would have yielded to his wishes. William had not the resolution to proceed, and Henrietta recovering from her emotion, mistook his silence for a tacit confession of having bent his will to hers, and that he no longer desired to retain M. Rautenbach so near to him. She perceived too the danger she had run, and resolved to have no more tête-á-tête's with him, till every thing was arranged to her wishes--she abruptly ended the conversation.

William then went daily to see Henrietta, but he always found her in company or abroad. At length he resolved to write to her. The substance of his note was—that he thought it his duty to take his benefactors to his own home, and that he left Henrietta's heart to judge of his motives.

Henrietta now perceived that she had flattered herself in supposing that he had yielded to her pretensions. She saw that his resolution was irrevocably fixed. At that

that very moment she received Antonia's letter. Having read it, she exclaimed, "Antonia then is acquainted with this subject of dispute between William and me. From whom could she learn it but William? The hypocrite: and did he think he could so easily amuse me——" She answered his letter in a spirit of raillery —she counselled him to continue near the court, and not to take the Collector's family to his own house if he had any thoughts of her hand. It would be not difficult, she said, to arrange matters, so that the Collector himself would desire to reside in some other place; that Antonia would be a mediatrix between them, and that he might still preserve all the appearance of generosity.

William considered this letter as the grossest affront. He instantly resigned all hope of Henrietta's hand, took possession of his place of inspector of the mines, and wrote to desire the Collector and his family to set out immediately for the place of his new residence. He did not wish to see

see Henrietta again, and, therefore, chose an hour for his final visit when he thought she would be from home. He found her, however, in the anti-chamber.

She conducted him into the room where company were assembled, coldly saying, "You come to pay your farewell visit." He attempted to explain, but she interrupted him with bitterness: "After the public defiance you have given me, Mr. Inspector, your excuses appear to me a little extraordinary."

He felt this himself, lost all recollection of what he was saying, and added, "After the concluding words of your letter, how could I act otherwise?"

"The concluding words of my letter!—very well; you sustain your part with marvellous address. These words related to Antonia's letter, of which you doubtless are entirely ignorant." She then put Antonia's letter into his hands, but he could not comprehend it, for his mind was exceedingly disturbed.

"Well, Sir," she said. He read the let-

ter

ter again, but without understanding a jot more of it.

"Well, Sir," she repeated. He read the letter for the third time, but could not perceive any connection between that and Henrietta's letter to him.

Henrietta's aunt suddenly entered the room, saying, "The Mareschal is coming, I wish to have a laugh at his expence.—Quickly, give me the mask I once lent you."

They retired into Henrietta's room, where William followed mechanically.—Henrietta opened a wardrobe, and took out the same mask she had worn at the masquerade.

"What do I see?" cried William with surprise: "the mafk——"

"Ungrateful man," said Henrietta with visible embarrassment, "it is that under which I would have recalled you to hope. Even then I loved you, and more tenderly than you loved me. You had then sacrificed me to the phantom of friendship, as now you sacrifice me to the chimera of

grati-

gratitude. Oh! William!" she added with tenderness and increased emotion, "you employed Antonia to mediate between us: why had you not confidence in me? Ungrateful man! I have done every thing to ensure your happiness, to crown your love. For your sake I broke with Rhodolphus, and under the covert of this mask, I would have taught you how to be happy."

"Oh horrible!" exclaimed William, the colour forsaking his cheeks: "unhappy woman, how have I been deceived by an appearance of honour in thee!"

Henrietta trembled; she looked earnestly at him, and saw terror only in his countenance. No expression of love, or even respect, remained. By degrees, however, she recovered from her own terror, and said with an appearance of dignity—"We have been mutually deceived in each other; henceforth let us think of each other only as friends." William bowed, and left the room without speaking.

He descended the staircase like one in a

dream,

dream, and returned home without knowing what he did. His whole soul revolted at Henrietta's treachery to his friend.—— "She loved me!" he said, "even then when her faith was still plighted to Rhodolphus!" He shrunk with agony from the picture his fancy drew of her character; yet he felt that he loved her, though he no longer could esteem her.

He found the Collector at his apartments, but his thoughts were so pre-occupied that he was some time without knowing his benefactor.

"My son," said the old man, "I have made this journey to tell you, that it is impossible we should come to reside with you."

"How!" said William, with a distracted air; and he fell back into his former thoughts, and it was with difficulty the Collector could bring his attention to himself and the object of his journey. William at length eagerly desired to know why the family could not reside with him? The Collector assigned some ob-

scure reasons, which led William's thoughts into a new train. Antonia's letter suddenly presented itself to his imagination, and he said with a sigh—"I divine the cause. You will not live with me, because of your affection for Antonia." These words made the Collector tremble. "How unhappy is my fate!" continued William.

"This love, which she shuts up in her bosom, is the cause of much unhappiness to us all. But what has betrayed this secret to you?"

William opened Antonia's letter to Henrietta, which in his confusion he had brought away with him; but he read it with a broken voice, and the Collector could only gather such expressions as long concealed love, and hopeless passion.

"How long have you been in possession of this letter?" said the Collector.

"About an hour," answered William, and he fell again into his former absence of mind.

"Yes," said the Collector, "I now perceive

ceive the cause of your despair. The poor child's life will be the victim of this passion."

"God forbid!" exclaimed William, half conscious of what passed.

"To say the truth, I can no longer blame her for wishing to avoid thy house for her habitation; for a consuming passion destroys Antonia. It was always our wish that she should be thy wife. Do not have an ill opinion of the poor girl for having spoken to thee of a love which I know to be without hope. How she could bring herself to this, however, I cannot comprehend."

A consoling ray of light broke in upon William. "How long have you formed the project of giving Antonia to me for a wife?"

"How long?" repeated the Collector: he then recounted all that Antonia, notwithstanding her own passion, had done for the happiness of William and Henrietta.

William was again utterly absent. He

compared Henrietta's conduct with that of Antonia, and after a while said, "Counsel me, my father! Your wishes shall be a law to me."

"Hem!" exclaimed the Collector—"I never doubted, my child, that you would throw yourself into a furnace, if either I or the Lieutenant gave the word; but, beloved son, I would not move you with my finger. Only I will say, act like a man! Years pass, and leave behind them only the remembrance of sorrows and pleasures. Act well and fear nothing. May God direct you! Within an hour I will return."

"Act like a man!" thought William when he was alone—"Is he not right?—Joy and grief pass with time, and nothing remains but the character of action." Without further hesitation, he wrote to Henrietta to say again, that his duty peremptorily commanded him to receive the family of the Collector under his own roof, and to remain inspector of the mines; and he plainly asked if, under these

these circumstances, she would give him her hand.

In her answer, Henrietta declared, that indeed she loved him; but that she knew how transitory the passions were, above all, Love! She perceived her plan of life would not accord with his. She would leave him to the guidance of his enthusiastic notions, while it became her to consult what was dictated by prudence, and a rigid examination of her own duty.—She concluded with, "I respect the rights of others, but I have not forfeited my own."

"I am satisfied!" said William with a sigh: "God grant her happiness!"

The Collector returned—William declared to him that he was now free from every tie. "Request Antonia," he continued, "to come and live under the same roof with us all. Have you not said to me, that it would be with difficulty I should become happy? I am at present persuaded of the truth of that. It is, how-

ever, a consolation, not to be unworthy of happiness."

"I do not altogether comprehend your meaning, my child?" said the Collector with a tender embrace. "To merit happiness is already to be more than half happy. I shall depart for the whole family and I hope you will yet have to say with us, I also am happy."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE whole family joined at George-grange, for that was the name of William's new habitation. William appeared at first afflicted at the loss of Henrietta, yet by degrees he became more tranquil, and the Collector said to his brother, "I will make you a bet that it will not be long before *the twins* are baptized."

The Pastor Bellmann paid a short visit

to

to the Collector's family, and informed them that Henrietta was on the point of being married to the young, amiable, and wealthy Baron de Schauer. William said with a smile, "God grant them happiness!" It was apparent that this news instantly gave him a courage till then unknown to him, for from that moment his mind became daily more and more tranquil.

M. Bellmann exulted greatly in the brilliant prospects of his daughter, nor could he forbear an observation on the difference between the rank of her intended husband and that of William. "I did expect," said he to the Collector, "from the talents of your son, from the distinction he at first obtained in the world, and particularly with the advantage of his engagements to my daughter, that he would made have a rapid advancement."

"I can only say," answered the Collector, "that we have here found happiness; your daughter perhaps has it still to seek. If William is but inspector instead of being

counsellor of the mines, the former is a title of honour for his soul. He chose the place of inspector that he might support us."

"He not only sacrificed a title to us," interrupted the Lieutenant, "but far more than that, he sacrificed his love and his hopes."

The Collector detailed at length the generous conduct of William, and also the heroic sacrifices so often repeated by Antonia. The Pastor was much affected, and took his leave of the family with a heart filled with sentiments of esteem and admiration for each worthy member of it.

Antonia continued to merit the highest praise. She treated William as a brother or a sincere friend. She loved him with inexpressible fondness, yet governed the expression of her feelings at all times and on all occasions. Her self-control in this instance was the more meritorious, as she still believed William was totally unacquainted with the nature of her affection for him.

William

William had attentively observed Antonia from the moment of her entering his house, for he had firmly resolved, when he could offer her an undivided heart, to make that the recompense of her long suffering: he was moved by her tenderness, and awed by her courage; his heart began to palpitate at her approach; he was surprised to find, that insensibly the image of Antonia, took possession of his sleeping and waking dreams. If he heard her pass his door, he could not forbear rising from his work, and always found a ready pretext, to detain her in a few minutes conversation. Henrietta was now forgotten, or remembered only to be secretly compared with Antonia; he thought her handsomer even than Henrietta, and daily perceived some new charm or grace, which he wondered he had not discovered before.

At length the family made their annual fête, on the second anniversary of that day, at once replete with happiness and misery, when they were found by William, without

out any other shelter than the tall trees of the forest.

"I should wish to have," said the Collector, filling the glasses, "a memorial of this day; a branch from one of the trees under which we sat, or an handful of the earth we there moistened with our tears. I wish to have some token of each happy or miserable day of my life."

"Brother," cried the Lieutenant, "why did I not bring the pane of glass with me, on which both our names were engraved? Have your our mother's ring?"

"Assuredly: there it is." He placed it on the cake, which stood in the middle of the table, and said, "whoever has a token of a happy day, let him place it there."

Madame Rautenbach drew off her wedding ring, and said, "When I received this, I thought it was the happiest day of my life, but I have tasted still greater happiness, for instance, on this day two years; and I hope to live to know one day still more happy than all the rest; when Antonia

nia shall receive the nuptial benediction."

"My brother," said the Collector, "have you nothing?" The Lieutenant bowed his head in silence.

"And then Antonia?" She could only answer with her tears.

"But William?"

"I prepared a token for this day," said he, "as if by inspiration;" and he presented Antonia a wedding ring. "I love you, Antonia! I love you more than I ever loved Henrietta: may I offer you this ring?" Antonia turned pale.

"God bless you, my son!" cried the Collector aloud; the Lieutenant dropt a tear into his glass; Antonia trembled; William put the ring upon her finger, and overcome with love and happiness, she fainted in his arms.

"May their union be eternal!" cried the Collector, with uplifted hands.

When Antonia recovered from her swoon, she was led by William into the garden. At her return, joy illumined her

her countenance; it beamed with celestial radiance.

"'Tis a pity," said the Collector, "that the *twins* are not visible."

At the end of three weeks, the Pastor joined the hands of William and Antonia. Only a few days sooner had Henrietta become the wife of Baron Schauer; and what was singular enough, she came immediately to reside at an estate of her husband's, within one mile of Georgegrange.

The Collector's family learnt this circumstance from herself. A splendid equipage stopt one morning at their door, from which Henrietta descended; she entered with an air the most friendly, testified her pleasure at their happiness, and spoke without reserve of their former intimacy.

"Confess, my dear friend," she said to William, "that Heaven has directed us better than we could have guided ourselves. Is it not true, M. Rautenbach? you often used to say, no one can be happy but after his own manner: I am quite of

that

that opinion. Fate has granted to each of us, the happiness that sorts best with our tempers. The narrow circle of domestic enjoyments, in which you find happiness, I am unsuited to. I thank Heaven, that has cast my lot into the great world; where I can lead the life that is to me happiness. In a few days, I shall set out with M. Schauer, on a tour to France; we shall also visit Switzerland and Italy; this has long been one of my wishes. My husband is very reasonable, he approves of the mode of life I choose, and is indulgent to all my caprices; in short, I am free, M. Rautenbach, which is the most desirable thing in the world; I possess that, which I have often heard you declare to be the greatest of blessings—independence."

"Independence!" exclaimed the Collector. "Yes; I have said so, but I spoke not of the independence you describe: (he thought of the beloved of his youth.) Dear child!" continued he with an air of melancholy, and kindly pressing her hand,

"you

"you possess all that you think necessary to happiness; but reflect, that no happiness can exist where the heart is not consulted, as well as the imagination; you have too much consulted the latter: it may aid the impulses of the heart, but no more: you have sought to be happy by the influence of imagination only: but it is thus, that happiness is too often lost, even that kind of happiness you have preferred to all others."

Henrietta smiled, instead of answering; and bidding the family adieu, she presently departed with her husband for Paris.

The Collector and his family enjoyed true happiness, which was further augmented when Antonia presented them with a lovely infant. Their perfect union made each day appear the day of a fête; every thing prospered around them, and the Collector began again to dispute; a certain sign that he had forgotten his misfortunes.

At the end of six years, Henrietta suddenly came to inquire after the welfare of

her old friends; she had returned from her travels with all her ease, but seemed somewhat more disposed to reflection: during the little time she passed at Georgegrange, she witnessed the felicity of the family; and Antonia being a few minutes alone with her, pressed her to her bosom, exclaiming, "What happiness is mine! my William has a heart formed for love; he knows of no enjoyments but those I partake with him, nor is he less tender, less devoted than on the first day of our union."

"Good Antonia! and he thus makes you a slave! the most enslaved woman on earth."

"Ah! who would not be the slave of a love so tender, so sincere." She proceeded to describe with fervor the blissful life she led, surrounded by her husband, her children, and her parents.

"Alas! Antonia!" said Henrietta at length, while tears gushed from her eyes, "and I—I am—but shut, I charge you, this secret for ever within your own breast: I

have no heart, and can taste no happiness; I would not love because I would be free, and no tumultuous throb of joy ever glows in my veins: this bosom, covered with brilliant ornaments, heaves with no affections; 'tis cold, 'tis joyless as the tomb!" She tore her diamonds from her bosom, exclaiming, "Away, ye hard, ye senseless stones! I will no longer dazzle the eyes of that world, wherein I can neither love nor be beloved! Farewell, excellent woman! be always happy!"

Antonia looked after her with compassion. "Unfortunate Henrietta!" And in pitying her fate, she clung with an increase of love to the warm and protecting heart of her excellent husband!

THE END.

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